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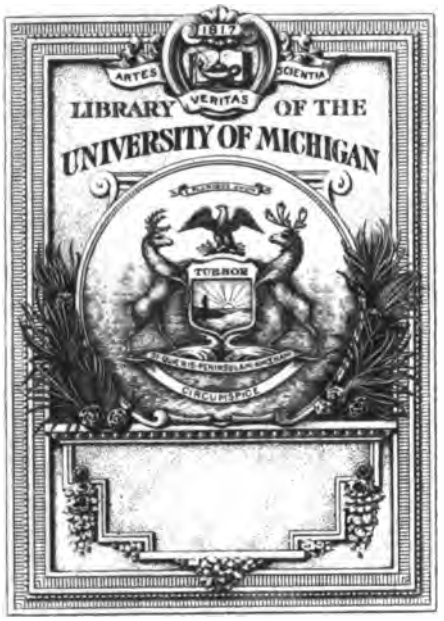

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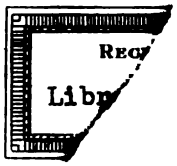
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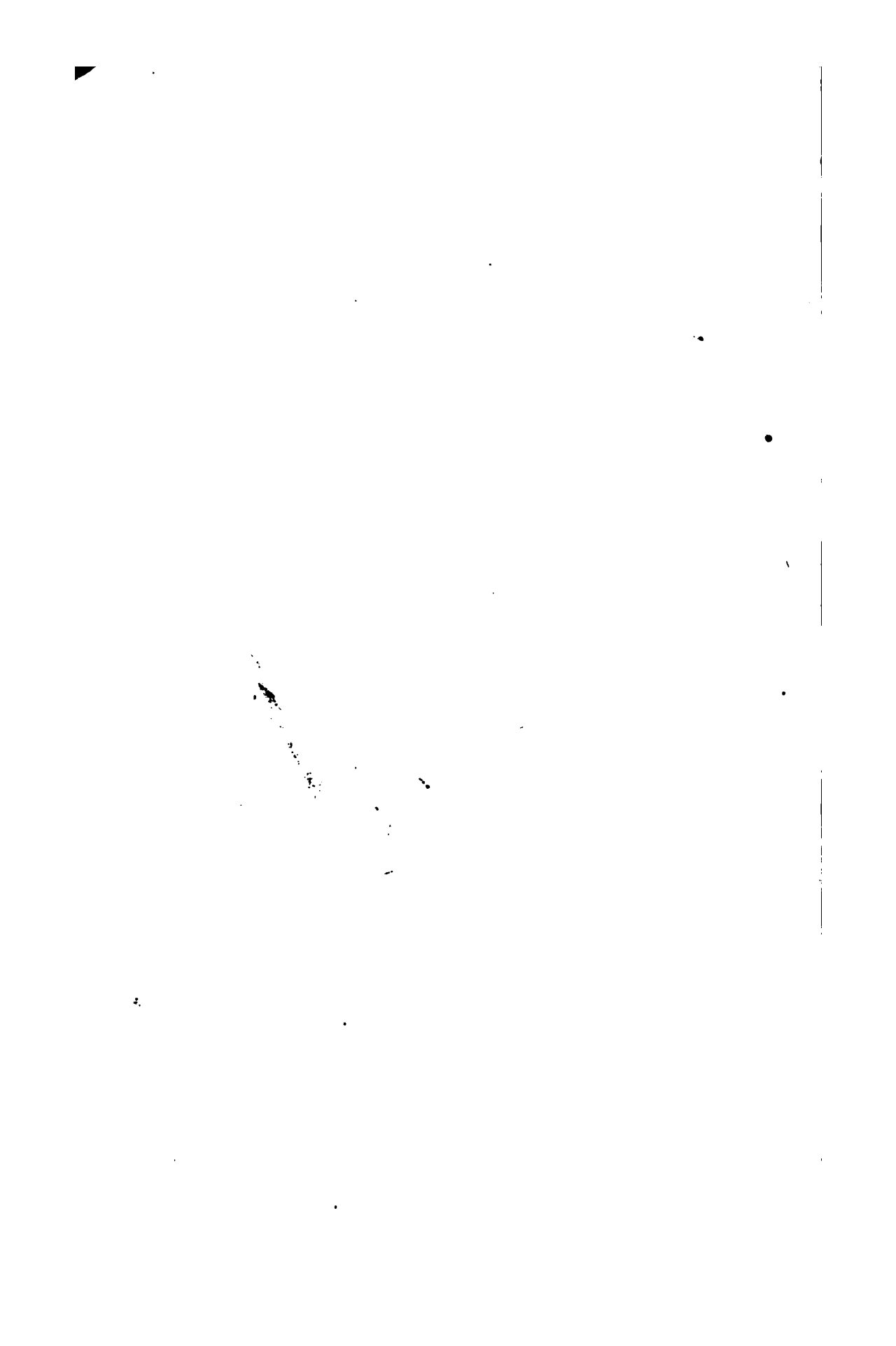

LECTURES ON INDIA:

ALSO, DESCRIPTIONS OF

REMARKABLE CUSTOMS

AND

PERSONAGES

IN OTHER

PAGAN AND MOHAMMEDAN COUNTRIES.

ILLUSTRATED BY

NUMEROUS ENGRAVINGS.

BOSTON:

PUBLISHED BY CALEB WRIGHT.

1849.

TESTIMONIALS.

From Rev. Rufus Anderson, D.D., of Boston.

"Mr. Caleb Wright visited India a few years since, to qualify himself for lecturing on the manners and customs of the people in that country; and the Lectures he has since published give evidence of the carefulness of his observations, and of his faithfulness in description. The volume entitled, 'Lectures on India,' &c., is valuable for its subject-matter, even beyond any other similar collection of the size within my knowledge."

From Rev. Jeremiah Day, D.D., LL.D., formerly President of Yale College.

"Mr. Wright has recently lectured in seven of the churches in this city (New Haven), to large and highly gratified audiences. I believe his Lectures are doing much good, and hope they will continue to receive the patronage they deserve."

While Mr. Wright was lecturing in the principal cities and towns in the United States, testimonials, similar to the above, were received from a great number of persons in eminent stations, among whom were twenty Presidents of Colleges and Theological Seminaries, viz.:

Rev. E. Nott, D.D., ... President of Union College.
L. Beecher, D.D., ... President of Lane Seminary.
J. Edwards, D.D., ... President (formerly) of Theol. Sem. Andover.
Jere. Day, LL.D., ... President (formerly) of Yale College.
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صالح الدمشقي

SHALEH,

Born in Damascus in 1822*; converted to Christianity, in Calcutta, in* 1845. *He was a Syaad, or direct descendent of Mohammed.*

COSTUMES

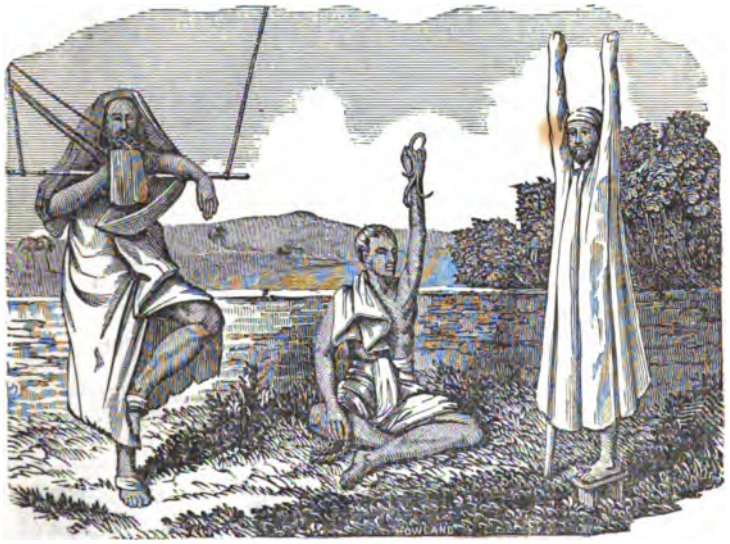
AND

REMARKABLE PERSONAGES

IN

INDIA,

BY CALEB WRIGHT.



THE AUTHOR HAS TRAVELLED MORE THAN FORTY THOUSAND MILES, FOR THE EXPRESS PURPOSE OF COLLECTING INFORMATION RESPECTING THE VARIOUS RACES OF PEOPLE WHOSE PECULIAR MANNERS, HABITS, AND SUPERSTITIONS HE DESCRIBES.

BOSTON:

PUBLISHED BY THE AUTHOR.

1849.

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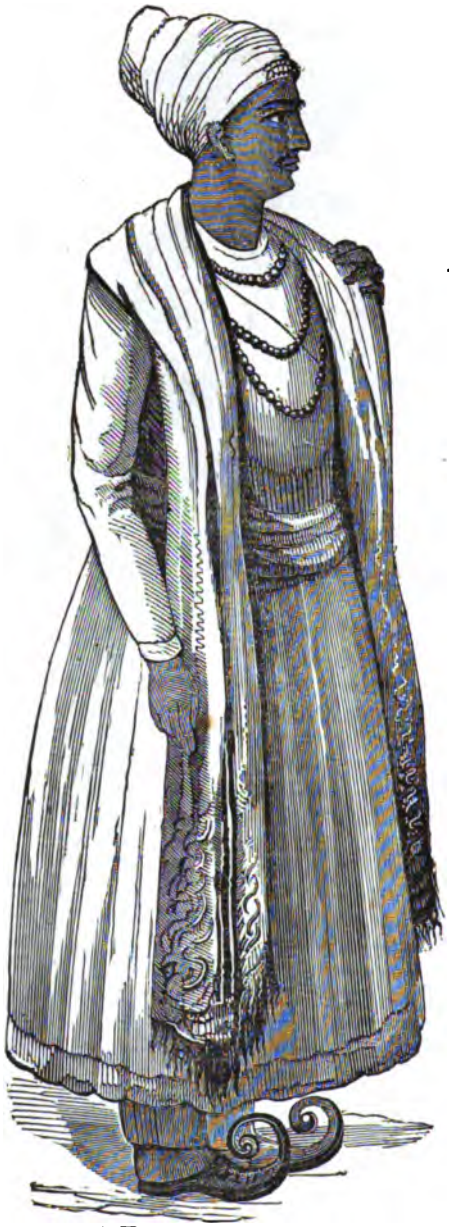
Calpintin
E. from Greenwich

Baber, the Founder of the Great Mogul Empire.

A Hindu of Bengal, of high rank, in full dress. The costume of the common people of Bengal is represented by an engraving at page 40.

A Mohammedan of Bengal, of high rank, in full dress.



A Hindu Merchant of Calcutta.

A Hindu Servant, with a Fan made of a Palm Leaf.

A Dancing Boy of Bengal.

A Dancing Girl of Bengal.

A Charun of Rajpootana.

A Byragee.

A Culi Soldier of the Forests of Rajpootana.

A Rajput Soldier of Marwar.

A Culi Chief. The Culis are a tribe of Robbers and Pirates in the north-west part of Hindustan.

Mohman Khaun, Nabob of Cambay.

An Afghan.

A Dooraunee of Afghanistan.

An Eusofzye of Afghanistan.

Surajah Dowlah and his Sons.

Deputy Governor of Kamboja in his dress of ceremony.

Meng-meng, King of Cochinchina, in his dress of ceremony.

A Siamese.

DESCRIPTION OF

COSTUMES AND REMARKABLE PERSONAGES.

BABER, the conqueror of Hindustan, and the founder of the Great Mogul Empire, was born in 1483, and was of Tartar descent. His empire greatly increased in extent and splendor until its decline, after the prosperous reign of Aurungzebe, the fifth in direct descent from this illustrious progenitor. In person, Baber was handsome, his address was engaging and unaffected, his countenance pleasing, and his disposition affable. (See engraving on page 9.) He was deeply skilled in legislation; his knowledge of natural history was accurate and profound, and he held an eminent rank among the poets of his country. Though possessing many good qualities, yet, like Timur Beg and Gengis Khan, his progenitors, and like Alexander and Napoleon, Baber was one of those scourges of the human race denominated great and glorious conquerors.

THE following graphic description of Hindu servants (see engraving on page 13) is from a letter written by an English lady in Madras: "Servants are very indolent, but each has his separate work. There is one man to lay the cloth, another to bring in dinner, another to light the candles,* and others to wait on the table. Every horse has a man and a maid to himself — the maid cuts grass for him; and every dog has a boy. I inquired whether the cat had any servants, but I found that she was allowed to wait upon herself, and as she seemed the only person in the establishment capable of so doing, I respected her accordingly.

"As you say you like to hear all about our domestic economy, servants, &c., I must tell you of a thievery which took place last week. We lost a pair of sheets, and the loss was laid to the horse-keeper, who was fined two rupees, it being the custom to punish the servants for every misdemeanor just as if they were children. But the purloiner of our sheets was in reality A——'s dress-boy, who had stolen them

* The English residents in India dine after sunset.

to make his own jackets. To avoid the expense of paying for making, he took them to a Coolie tailor, which you may understand to mean a cobbling tailor, who sometimes cobbles for us, and is therefore obliged to do the servants' needle work for nothing, for fear of having lies told of him to 'Master,' and so losing Master's favor. Coolie tailor lives near *my* tailor, who is a grandee in comparison; and Coolie, being very glad to have some good European materials to boast of, and extremely proud of his job, showed them off to my tailor. Grandee tailor was more used to the ways of Europeans, and knew that they did not give their good sheets for the servants to make jackets of; so he guessed they had been stolen, and told my ayah, and she told me, not out of any pretence of conscience or care of my goods, but because, as she said, Mrs. Staunton had told her, on hiring her, that she was to take care of my things, and that, if anything was lost, I would 'take away her bread,' meaning dismiss her; and then she must 'eat up her own money.' It was hopeless for any of us to attempt to find out the truth, because the chances were even as to the dress-boy's being a thief, or the ayah and tailor liars; so the only way was to give orders that two of the other servants should search into the matter: one alone would have just told a lie on whichever side suited him, but two were supposed to be a check on each other. Accordingly, there was a regular form of trial held under a mango tree in the compound:* I watched them from the window, and a capital group they made. The butler, as judge, waving his arms in the air like the leaves of a cocoa-nut tree; the criminal standing in the midst, looking more mean and crest-fallen than any European could manage to look under any possible circumstances; the ayah, smoothing down her oily hair with her fingers as she told her story; and the rest of the servants standing round to make a kind of jury, assisted by all their retainers of hags and imps in the shape of old women and naked black children. A verdict of Guilty was brought in, and the thief, Chelapa by name, was of course, dismissed from our service. Then followed a variety of queer scenes. Chelapa would not go, but remained on his knees in A——'s dressing room, his turban in his hand, stroking his shaven poll, and kissing the floor, in hopes of being forgiven. When he was sent 'out of that,' the butler came back with him to bespeak compassion: 'Sar! Master boy, cry Sar!' Chelapa took the hint and began to cry accordingly, till, finding nothing would do, he consoled himself by abusing the ayah, telling her he would 'walk round the house' every day till he could

*Field, or garden, round the house.

find out some 'rogue business' of her doing: to which, she says, she 'made compliments;' but she was in reality so frightened at the threat, that she cried for three days. Then the tailor began to cry, for fear some harm should happen to him in the scuffle, and looked up in my face so piteously every time I went up and down stairs that I could not pass him without laughing. A—— asked the horse-keeper why he had submitted to a false accusation, and to be fined for stealing, when he knew he had done no such thing; he answered, 'What for make trouble? Master tell horse-keeper thief; what use horse-keeper tell? Horse-keeper make trouble, Master tell 'Go away!' The probability is, that he was paid by the thief to take the blame."

"We are now living at St. Thomé, a sort of suburb of Madras, close by the sea-side, and comparatively cool. It is said to be a thievish place: we have two sepoys to guard the house at night. When we first came we were awakened at intervals by a most horrible yelling and screaming: we thought it must be drunken men, and scolded the sepoys for not keeping them off, but we found it was the sepoys themselves, yelling for their own security, to frighten the hobgoblins. Yesterday I saw a slim young black creeping up my back-stairs outside the house, peering about in a sneaking, suspicious sort of a way; and as soon as he saw me he ran off and hid himself. I thought he might be a thief, so I turned out all the servants to catch him, but he proved to be nothing but the dog-boy looking for shoes to clean. I asked him why he ran away in that foolish fright, if he was only employed in his proper business; and I was told that he could not help it, for he had never seen the Mistress so close before, and she frightened him.

"A—— is busily employed in translating into Tamul a book which we hope may be useful. The Moonshee transcribes it for him, and is a complete baby about it. I think he must spend all his time in copying it over and over. One day he brings 'to show Mistress a fair copy,' and the next day 'if Mistress please to look, a more fairer copy,' and he will stand for a quarter of an hour at a time in the middle of the room, making salaam, and twirling his mustachios, and stroking his manuscript. A—— works with the Moonshee while I scold the tailor. I scold him from the 'best of motives,' and here are my reasons: he is hired by the month, and paid a great deal more than he is worth,—dawdle that he is!—but it is the only way of getting needlework done at all here. He often asks for a day's leave of absence, and often takes it without asking. I used to be compassionate to him at first, believing his excuses; but when I repeated them to Mrs. Staunton, she

said they were all lies. One day he told me that his mother was sick, and that she would soon be dead, and he would 'put her out of the way;' but Mrs. Staunton said that this mother had already died three times to her certain knowledge, and that I must forbid her ever being sick again without my permission; so I gave my orders accordingly, and she has been quite well ever since. Sometimes he sits on his mat crying, and saying he is 'plenty sick' himself, so then I send him away for half a day, with orders to come back quite well next morning, or I shall get another tailor; and this always cures him. One day he asked me for five days' leave 'to paint his face:' this *did* puzzle me, but I found it was on account of the Mohurrum, a kind of Mussulman carnival, when they all dress up, and paint not only their own faces, but those of all their animals."

HINDU dancing girls (see engraving on page 15) are generally dressed in long embroidered robes of fine muslin, and decked with jewels, ear-rings, nose-rings, bracelets, armlets, anklets, bands around the head, and rings on all the fingers and toes. Their dancing consists in moving slowly and gracefully in various directions, jingling their anklets and bracelets by running backward and forward upon their heels, turning slowly round and round, waving their hands, bending from side to side, and gliding up to the spectators, performing many peculiar and graceful antics. The natives of India are passionately fond of witnessing these dances, and generally provide them for the amusement of their guests on all festive occasions. The dancing girls are bought when children, and adopted into a partnership to which the income belongs as common stock: each rising in turn to the management of the general fund, as she acquires the right by seniority. In many instances this fund accumulates to an immense amount. Some of the best houses and handsomest temples in Benares have been erected by women of dancing notoriety. See the description of a dancing girl on page 75.

THOSE families who cannot afford the expense of dancing women at their religious festivals and weddings, employ Ba-yees, or dancing boys. (See engraving on page 14.) These are generally of the Mohammedan sect, and are richly dressed in colored muslin of the finest texture. A roll of silver tissue is wound several times round the waist; the border of the ample skirt, the sleeves and the neck are richly ornamented with a broad silver ribbon, the feet are decorated with small bells, and the

wrists with bracelets of silver or gold. The musicians who accompany them are generally their relatives. Sometimes musicians buy young children of their parents and teach them to dance. When they arrive at the age of fifteen or sixteen years, or are too large to dance as Ba-yees, they either learn to play on musical instruments, or quit the profession entirely.

THE Charuns and Bhats (see engraving on page 16) repeat verses of their own composition in praise of renowned warriors, and in commemoration of victories, and loudly proclaim the achievements of rajahs and princes during public processions and visits of ceremony. They are also hired to become responsible for the performance of various treaties and promises. Should a Charun or a Bhat become responsible for a person who fails to fulfil his engagement, he goes into the presence of the delinquent, and kills either himself or one of his own relatives, imprecating the most dire vengeance of the gods upon him who rendered it necessary to shed innocent blood. They regard themselves as privileged races, and refuse to pay taxes to government. On one occasion, in the city of Neriad, when the Bhats were required by Ragohah to pay a tax, "the whole tribe, men, women, and children, armed with daggers, repaired to an open space in the city, and, with a loud voice, proclaimed a dreadful sacrifice. They once more prayed for an exemption, which being refused, they rushed furiously upon each other, and a considerable number perished before the astonished troops could disarm them. One man, more cool and deliberate than the rest, brought his family to the area before the durbar: it consisted of two younger brothers and a beautiful sister, all under eighteen years of age; he first stabbed the unresisting damsel to the heart, instantly plunged the dagger into the breast of one brother, and desperately wounded the other before he could be prevented. This man was afterwards heard to boast of having sacrificed his father a few months before in the glorious cause for which he had now become a fratricide."*

THE Byragees, Fakeers, and other sects of religious mendicants, constitute a numerous class of persons who unite the several characters of saints, living martyrs, jugglers, robbers and cut-throats, which according to the superstitious notions of the Hindus, are not irreconcilable. (See engraving on page 17.) Singly, and in companies, they wander throughout India, stealing, plundering, murdering, and

* James Forbes, Esq.

committing the grossest acts of obscenity and violence; yet these fanatics, professedly more holy than other men, pretend to live on alms, because labor is inconsistent with their ideas of a religious life. The following ludicrous account of an army of religious mendicants is from 'Dow's History of Hindustan:'

"The security which Aurungzebe had acquired, by the defeat of so many formidable rivals, was disturbed from a quarter which added ridicule to danger. In the territory of the prince of Marwar, near the city of Nuggur, there lived an old woman who was arrived at the eightieth year of her age. She possessed a considerable hereditary estate, and had accumulated by penury a great sum of money. Being seized with a fit of enthusiasm, she became all of a sudden prodigal of her wealth. Fakeers and sturdy beggars, under a pretence of religion, to the number of five thousand, gathered around her castle, and received her bounty. These vagabonds, not satisfied with what the old woman bestowed in charity, armed themselves, and, making predatory excursions into the country, returned with spoil to the house of their patroness, where they mixed intemperance and riot with devotion. The people, oppressed by these holy robbers, rose upon them, but were defeated with great slaughter.

"Repeated disasters of the same kind were at last attributed to the power of enchantment. The ridiculous opinion gaining ground, fear became predominant in the opponents of the Fakeers. The banditti, acquiring confidence from their success, burned and destroyed the country for many leagues, and surrounded the castle of the pretended enchantress with a desert. The Raja marched against them with his native troops, but was defeated; the collectors of the imperial revenue attacked them, but they were forced to give way. A report prevailed, and was eagerly believed by the multitude, that on a certain day of the moon the old lady used to cook, in the skull of an enemy, a mess composed of owls, bats, snakes, lizards, human flesh, and other horrid ingredients, which she distributed to her followers. The abominable meal, it was believed by the rabble, had the surprising effect of not only rendering them void of all fear themselves, and inspiring their enemies with terror, but even of making them invisible in the hour of battle when they dealt their deadly blows around.

"Their numbers being now increased to twenty thousand, this motley army, with the old woman at their head, directed their march towards the capital. Bistumia, for this was her name, was a commander full of cruelty. She covered her route with murder and devastation, and

had her rear in the smoke of burning villages and towns. Having advanced to Narnoul, about five days journey from Agra, the collector of the revenue attacked her with a force, and was totally defeated. The affair was now become serious, and commanded the attention of the Emperor. He found that the minds of the soldiers were tainted with the prejudices of the people, and he thought it necessary to combat Bistumia with weapons like her own. The Emperor, in the presence of the army, delivered to his general billets written with his own hand, which were *said* to contain *magical enchantments*. His reputation for sanctity was at least equal to that of Bistumia; and he ordered a billet to be carried on the point of a spear before each squadron, which the soldiers were made to believe would counteract the enchantment of the enemy. The credulity which induced them to dread the witchcraft of the old woman, gave them confidence in the pretended charm of Aurungzebe.

"The Fakeers, after their victory at Narnoul, thought of nothing but the empire for their aged leader. Having rioted on the country for several days, they solemnly raised Bistumia to the throne, which gave them an excuse for festivity. In the midst of their intemperate joy, Sujait, the imperial general, made his appearance. They fought with the fury of fanatics; but when the idea of supernatural aid was dispelled from the minds of the Imperialists, the Fakeers were not a match for their swords. It was not a battle, but a confused carnage: a few owed their lives to the mercy of Sujait, the rest met the death which they deserved. Aurungzebe, when he received Sujait after his victory, could not help smiling at the ridicule thrown on his arms by the opposition of an old woman at the head of an army of naked mendicants." See page 54.

THE costumes of the Afghans, Dooraunees and Eusofzyes, differ considerably in different provinces. (See engravings on pages 22, 23 and 24.) Some of their chiefs and nobles wear a linen shirt, wide drawers of silk, an under tunic of chintz which extends nearly to the ankles, an upper tunic of the same kind, but of different materials, a shawl girdle, a cap with a shawl twisted round it in the form of a turban, white cotton or shawl stockings, Persian shoes, and a large mantle thrown over the shoulders. The upper tunic is made of dark colored cotton cloth, satin, shawl or Persian brocade, and is not unfrequently a very costly and splendid garment. The mantle is also made of the same materials, and in winter it is sometimes lined and trimmed with expensive furs. The long shawl round the waist is

elaborately wrought, and, consequently, very expensive; a good one costs from five hundred to one thousand dollars. The shawl on the head is of the kind worn by ladies in England and America, and by all rich *men* in India. The shawls of which tunics are made are covered with small flowers on a colored ground, and the mantle of the same material has very large flowers, such as are seen on the borders of shawls in America. When a nobleman is on a journey, he generally dresses in broadcloth.

The ladies wear the Persian costume, and, of course, have an endless variety of clothing and ornaments. The most remarkable parts of their dress are their trowsers of stiff velvet, or of elaborately wrought shawl or silk, and their jackets of velvet brocade, ornamented with rows of buttons and with broad lace, on which colored flowers are wrought.

SURAJAH DOWLAH, Nabob of Bengal, (see engraving on page 25,) was educated an Oriental prince, and, by indulgence, had acquired an unusual share of princely vices. He was ignorant, voluptuous, impatient and headstrong, greedy of riches, proud of his power, and ambitious of triumph. In the city of Calcutta, in 1756, he crowded one hundred and forty-six British prisoners into a dungeon only eighteen feet square, called the *Black Hole*, and in one night one hundred and twenty-two of them died of suffocation.

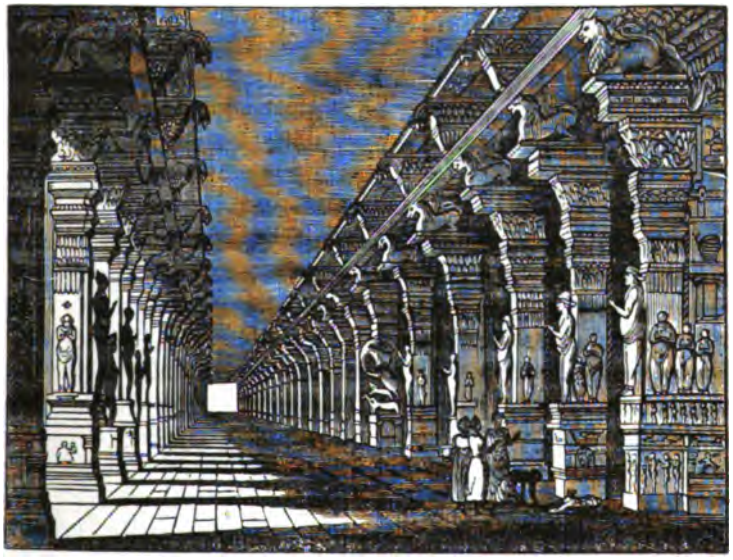
THE Siamese wear less clothing than any other civilized people of the East. (See engraving on page 28.) The head and feet of both sexes are always naked, and the upper part of the body generally so. A piece of silk or cotton cloth, from five to seven cubits in length, is wrapped round the loins, the most respectable classes permitting the ends of the dress to hang loosely in front, and the lower orders passing them under the body and securing them behind. This difference in the manner of wearing the cloth is not left to the discretion of the parties, but enforced by law, or by custom equally imperative; for the plebeian who infringes it, is liable to summary punishment from the followers of any person of distinction who may chance to meet him. In addition to the principal garment, a narrow scarf, about four cubits long, is sometimes worn either round the waist or thrown carelessly over the shoulders.

LECTURES ON INDIA,

BY

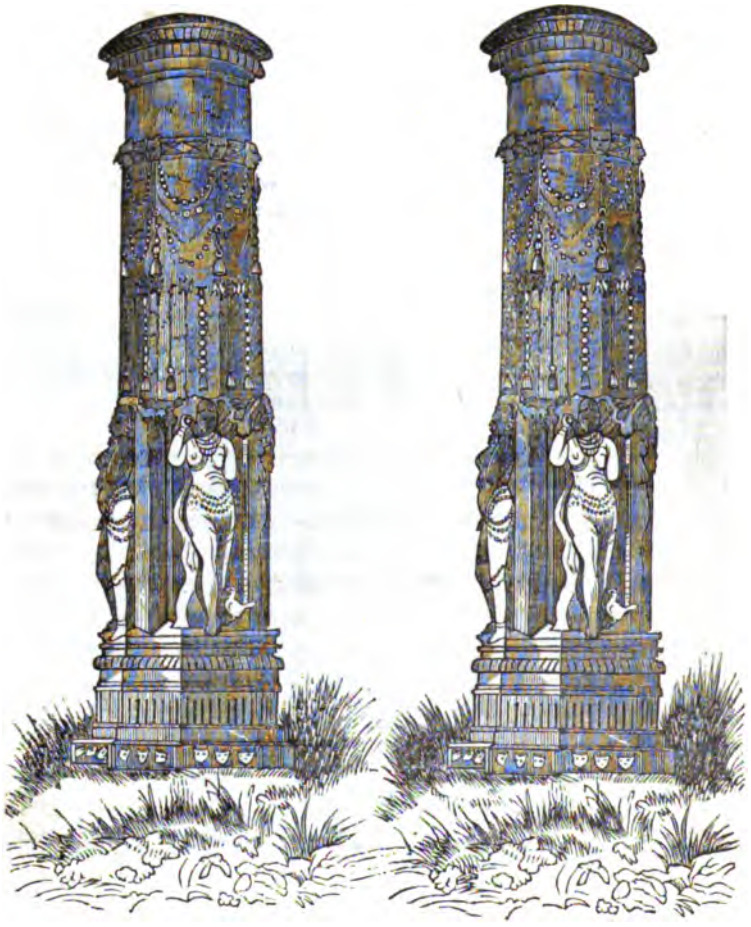
CALEB WRIGHT.

THE AUTHOR HAS TRAVELLED MORE THAN 40,000 MILES FOR THE EXPRESS PURPOSE OF COLLECTING INFORMATION RESPECTING THE VARIOUS RACES OF PEOPLE WHOSE PECULIAR MANNERS, HABITS, AND SUPERSTITIONS, HE DESCRIBES.



LECTURE I.

PUBLISHED BY THE AUTHOR.



BEAUTIFUL SPECIMEN OF HINDU ARCHITECTURE AT BAROLLI.

These Columns are in the immediate vicinity of a very large and beautiful temple, now in ruins. They probably supported a swing, for the recreation of the god.
See engraving, representing the swinging of Krishna, page 66.

LECTURES ON INDIA.

LECTURE I.

It is the opinion of some eminent geographers, that India, under the name of *Tarshish*, was known in the days of Solomon, and celebrated as the land of spices, gold, and precious stones; but, whether it be the Tarshish of the ancients or not, it has for a long time been justly regarded with great interest. Here, vast and powerful empires have successively sprung up and flourished, while Europe was in a state of barbarism. Long before Christianity shed its light upon the world, India was the land of science and the arts. At the present time, however, its prominent characteristics are ignorance, poverty, and superstition.

It is not my purpose to direct your attention to the whole of India, but only to that portion of it usually denominated Hindustan, or India within the Ganges. This is a large peninsula, projecting into the Indian Ocean, south-west of the Chinese Empire, from which it is separated by the Himalaya Mountains. With a territory about as large as Mexico, it is supposed to contain a population of one hundred and thirty millions, or more inhabitants than England, Scotland, Ireland, Russia, and the continent of America.

The Hindus are of various dissimilar races, differing materially in stature, complexion, manners, language, and general character. The Rajpoots and mountaineers of the north are large and of great muscular strength, while the inhabitants farther south are generally of small stature and of slender form. In complexion, they vary from a dark olive approaching to black, to a light, transparent, beautiful brown, resembling that of the natives of Northern Italy.

They are very fond of ornaments, such as rings in the ears and nose, with bracelets on the arms and ankles; yet their dress is exceedingly simple.

The family in this engraving are in the usual Hindu costume. The dress of the male consists of two pieces of cotton cloth, each containing about two yards. The one, called the *dhotee*, is girt about the loins and extends to the ankles. The other, called the *chadder*, is worn over the shoulders. The dress of the female is called a *saree*, and consists of a single piece of cloth of from four to seven yards. One end of this piece is wrapped around the loins, the width reaching to the feet; the other is gracefully thrown around the shoulders. In some parts of the country, it also covers the head. The children wear no clothing until they are from five to eight years of age; but they are frequently decorated with ornaments and jewels of considerable value.

The food of this people, with but few exceptions, is vegetable The use of animal food is denied them by their religion, unless the animals be first sacrificed to some idol. At their meals, they use neither tables, chairs, knives, forks, nor spoons. They sit upon the floor, and put the food into the mouth with the fingers of the right hand. They take their drink from a brass cup, which they never touch with the lips, but pour the liquid into the mouth. Fermented and distilled liquors are used only by the lowest castes; but the use of tobacco is almost universal, and here, as elsewhere,

nas a most pernicious influence. Many of both sexes chew betel, a drug more filthy, if possible, than tobacco itself.

Most of the Hindu dwellings are rude huts, like the one in the engraving. The usual size is about eighteen feet long and twelve wide. The walls are built of mud, and the roof is thatched with straw or with the leaves of the palm. In cities, however, and in large villages, to prevent damage by fire, tiles are used instead of thatch. The cost of such dwellings varies from five to twenty dollars, according to the size and manner of finish. About one house in a thousand is built of durable materials, such as brick or stone. In cities they may be found from two to four stories high. These have flat roofs, and are built around a court or open space in the centre. In some houses, the court is very large, and is decorated with fountains, trees, and flowering shrubs. Most of the windows open into the court. As Hindu dwellings have few or no windows towards the street, they appear very much like prisons; and, in some respects, they are prisons; for within their walls the females are incarcerated for life. Such is the jealousy of their husbands, that they are never to be seen in the streets or in any public assembly. It is only the higher class of females, however, who are kept thus secluded; among the common people, women are to be seen at work in the fields, or going to market with large bundles of wood, or other heavy burdens, borne upon the head.

In the next engraving, you have a representation of the usual method of travelling. With but few exceptions, there are no roads; consequently, wheel carriages are seldom used. This vehicle is called a *palankeen*. On the sides are sliding doors or venetians. Its construction in other respects will be readily understood. The usual number of bearers is eight. Four of these carry the palankeen thirty or forty rods; then the others take it upon their shoulders; thus, alternately, they relieve each other. Beside the bearers, several other men are employed to carry the baggage and to bear lighted torches by night. The bearers* and other assistants are changed once in about ten miles, or as often as stage-drivers change their horses. The traveller proceeds on his journey from seventy to ninety miles in twenty-four hours, at an expense of about twenty-five cents per mile.

* "The palankeen bearers rarely quarrel with the people of the villages through which they pass; but at the end of a stage they often dispute violently among themselves about the veriest trifles; and, when they are excited, their language and gestures are most extravagant, so as to lead a stranger to apprehend serious consequences. A friend of mine, a Danish missionary, on his arrival in Madras, was

Travelling in a Palankeen.

Here is a Brahmin engaged in reading and explaining a poem containing some hundred thousand stanzas written on palm-leaf. It is one of many others equally voluminous, and has been handed

despatched to his station, in the interior, by palankeen. At the end of the first stage, the bearers quarrelled violently. As he knew neither their language nor character, he imagined that he was the subject of their quarrel, and that they intended to

down from generation to generation for more than three thousand years; it is written in Sanscrit, a dead language of a "wonderful construction — more perfect than the Greek, more copious than the Latin, and more exquisitely refined than either." It is a portion of the Holy Vedas. In a peculiar tone of voice, he chants the sacred text, stopping at the end of each stanza to translate and explain. His hearers listen attentively to the exciting narrative, now convulsed with laughter at some dexterous exploit, and then thrilled with horror at some dreadful calamity. All the religious books of the Hindus, including the four Vedas, are called *Shasters.** They are so numerous that an entire human life would not be sufficient for an attentive perusal of them.

These men are celebrating the Huli festival. On this occasion, the people of all classes use the most obscene and abusive language, and, by means of large syringes, bespatter each other with

murder him. His imagination was so wrought upon, that he supplicated them, in Danish, to have mercy upon him, and offered them his money and his gold watch, if they would spare his life and conduct him safely on his journey. They gazed at him with astonishment, not comprehending either his fears or his promises; and his uneasiness continued until the next day, when he met with a European friend, who relieved him from all further apprehension, and advised the bearers to be more peaceable towards each other." — *Hoole's Travels in India.*

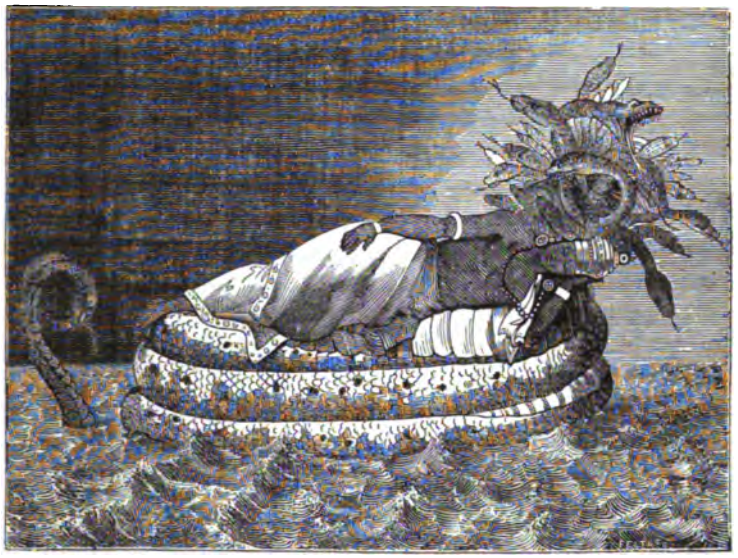
* See "Specimens of the Shasters or Sacred Books of the Brahmins, consisting of Songs, Legendary Tales, &c.," page 161 of this volume.

colored water; they also pelt each other with red and yellow powder, and with the mud and filth of the streets. Should a Hindu be asked why he conducts in this manner at the time of the Huli, he would say, "It is our custom, and it can be proved from the Shasters that it has been the custom of our forefathers for millions of generations." To the mind of a Hindu, whatever is customary is proper; for he believes that the customs of his forefathers, civil, social, and religious, were instituted by the gods, and are therefore incapable of improvement. The effect of this belief is to keep every thing stationary. There is no progress in knowledge — no change for the better in any department in life. The fashion of dress, the form of agricultural and mechanical instruments, the manner of erecting habitations, and the performance of various kinds of labor, are the same as they were thousands of years ago. This fact may be illustrated by an anecdote. An English gentleman devised various plans of introducing improvements; among others, he wished to substitute wheelbarrows for the baskets in which the natives carry burdens on their heads. He caused several of these useful articles to be constructed, and labored with much assiduity to introduce them among his workmen. In his presence, they used them with apparent cheerfulness, and even admitted that they were far preferable to the baskets. The gentleman was delighted with his success. On one occasion, however, having been absent a few hours, on returning somewhat unexpectedly, he was surprised to find all his laborers carrying the wheelbarrows filled with earth on their heads.

Their unyielding attachment to ancient customs is the natural result of their religious belief. Any change, however slight, in the mode of labor or business, is a violation of religious duty. It is evident, therefore, that the comforts and improvements of civilized life can never be introduced among the Hindus until they become convinced of the falsity of their Shasters and the foolishness of their traditions. The first step in the process of reform and improvement is to renounce that system of religion which for thousands of years has held them in the most cruel bondage.

The subject of the next engraving is beautifully sculptured on the surface of a large rock in the Ganges, and is also frequently represented by the Hindus in their paintings. An enormous serpent, having many heads, is coiled up in such a manner as to form a couch, upon which a Hindu divinity is sleeping. It illustrates a familiar legend in their Shasters. After the destruction of a

former world by a deluge, this divinity, whose name is Vishnu, composed himself to sleep on a thousand-headed serpent, which floated upon the surface of the waters; during a nap of some mil-



lions of years, a water-lily grew from his body; from this flower issued Brahma, the Creator. Having formed the world anew and created many of the gods, he proceeded to create man, when the four classes or castes into which the Hindus are divided issued from different parts of his body: the Brahmins from his head, the Kshutryus from his arms, the Voishnus from his breast, while the Shudras had their ignoble origin in his feet; agreeably to which legend, the Brahmins are supposed to be entitled to a very high rank, while the Shudras are hardly regarded as human beings. These four classes have, from various causes, been divided into more than two hundred distinct castes. If one of high caste violate the rules of his community, he cannot receive an honorable dismission, and enter a lower caste, but is forever excluded from all respectable society; repentance and reformation have no tendency to restore him. One of low caste, though ever so learned, wise, or virtuous, can make no approximation to a higher caste. The distance between the Shudra, the lowest caste, and the Brahmin, is immeasurably great; the Brahmin cannot even instruct the Shudra, but with the greatest precaution, lest he should be defiled. But, low as the Shudra is, he has an honorable standing

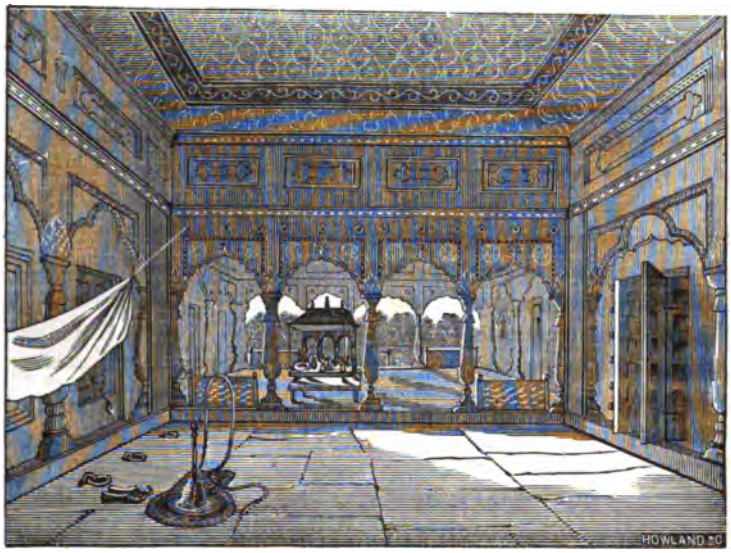
in society when compared with the Parriahs, a race who are not regarded as having any caste. They, when walking in the street, must keep on the side opposite the sun, lest their filthy shadows should fall upon the consecrated Brahmin. It is not uncommon to see the lower castes prostrating themselves as worshippers at the feet of the Brahmin, and greedily drinking the water which he has condescended to sanctify by the immersion of his great toe.

The pernicious influence of caste is strikingly illustrated by an incident related to me by Rev. Mr. Day, a missionary at Madras. As he was riding through a native village, he saw a woman lying by the side of the street, apparently in the agonies of death; she had lain there about twenty-four hours, and, during all this time, the villagers had been constantly passing and repassing, without manifesting the least interest or sympathy. When Mr. Day asked them why they thus neglected this woman, and suffered her to lie there and die, they replied, "Why should we take care of her? She does not belong to our caste." A little rice-water, it appears, had been offered her, but she would not drink it, simply because the person offering it belonged to a lower caste. Had she tasted the rice-water, or eaten any food cooked by these villagers, or even drank pure water from their vessels, she would have lost caste. And what then? Her own children would have fled from her as from one infected with the plague; her husband would not have permitted her to enter his house; even the parental roof would not have afforded her an asylum for a single moment; had any friends or relatives dared to associate with her, they too would have lost caste and been involved in the same disgrace. Thus she would necessarily become an outcast and a vagabond.

In most of the large houses in India, there is an apartment which serves as a family chapel. The next engraving represents such an apartment in a very elegantly-finished house in the city of Benares. In the farther part of the chapel is the altar or shrine on which the idols are placed. Each member of the family is expected to offer up his devotions to these idols every morning and evening.

According to their own standard, the Hindus are preëminently a religious people. The number of their gods, as stated in their Shasters, is three hundred and thirty millions. These fabled gods are not represented as acting in concert; they fight and quarrel with each other, and with their wives and children, murder the innocent for the sake of plunder, and commit crimes, the bare recital of which to a Christian audience would excite the utmost horror and disgust.

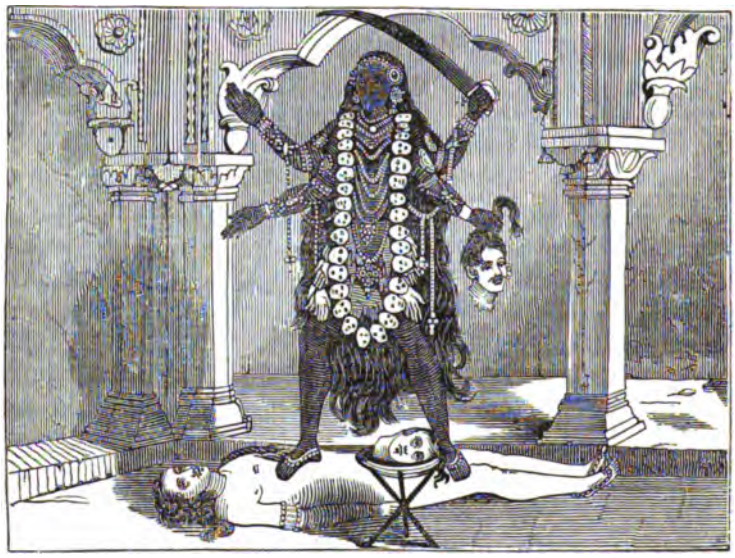
It is generally admitted, that neither nations nor individuals aim at greater purity of morals than their religion requires. We may expect to find any community below, rather than above this stand-



ard. This is true in regard to the Hindus. Their gods and goddesses being extremely vicious, the manner in which they are worshipped must correspond with their character; it cannot be expected that the moral character of the people should be other than it is, a compound of every thing that is debasing. Gross and polluted as their divinities are, they are yet too refined and elevated, in their estimation, to be worshipped without imagery. Images are made in forms as various, unnatural, and horrid, as the imagination can conceive. When one of them is consecrated by the Brahmin, the divinity for whom it is designed is supposed to take up his abode in it, and is propitious or unpropitious according to the manner in which it is worshipped.

The goddess Kali, on the next page, is represented as a woman of a dark blue color, with four arms, in the act of trampling under her feet her prostrate and supplicating husband. In one hand she holds the bloody head of a giant, and in another an exterminating sword. Her long, dishevelled hair reaches to her feet; her tongue protrudes from her distorted mouth; and her lips, eyebrows, and breast, are stained with the blood of the victims of her fury,

whom she is supposed to devour by thousands. Her ear ornaments are composed of human carcasses. The girdle about her waist consists of the bloody hands of giants slain by her in single



combat, and her necklace is composed of their skulls. This monster divinity is one of the most popular objects of Hindu worship. She calls forth the shouts, the acclamations, and the free-will offerings of myriads of infatuated worshippers. Her temples are continually drenched with the blood of victims; even human victims are occasionally sacrificed to her. In 1828, the Rajah of the Goands sacrificed twenty men at one time, as the promised reward of her supposed assistance in a single enterprise.

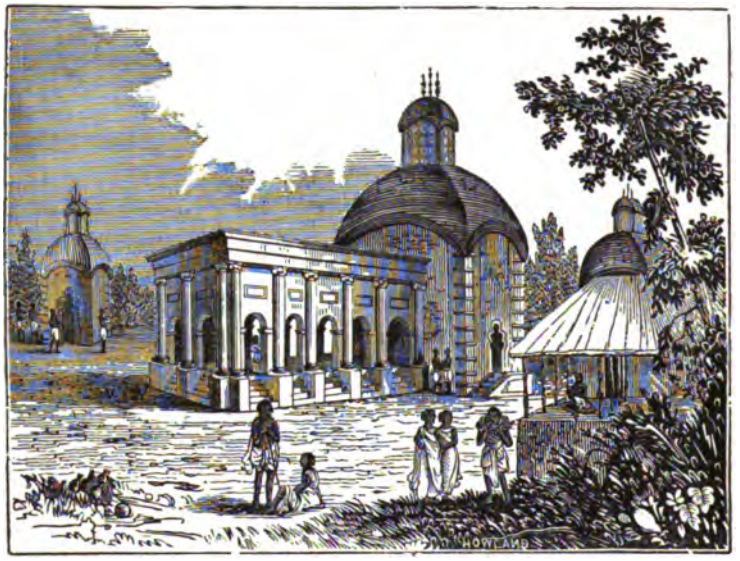
The Hindus, like the inhabitants of more civilized countries, have secret societies. The most remarkable of these is the society of the Thugs, which boasts of great antiquity. In some respects, it is a religious society; for its members believe that they are under the immediate guidance and protection of Kali, and that she permits them to obtain their livelihood by murdering travellers on the highway and then taking their property. It would be quite inconsistent with their religious principles, to rob any person until he is first deprived of life by strangulation. They affirm that this system was instituted by Kali, and is consequently of divine origin; that, for many thousands of years, she assisted them in escaping detection, by devouring the dead bodies of their victims;

but, on a certain occasion, a Thug, contrary to her command, looked back to see how she disposed of the corpses, and saw her feasting on them. This circumstance so offended her, that she declared she would no longer devour those whom they murdered. They believe, however, that she still continues to assist them, and that she directs their movements by certain omens. When, therefore, they are about to commence their excursions, in order to propitiate the favor of Kali, they sacrifice a sheep, by cutting off its head, upon which the priest pours water and repeats the following prayer: "Great Goddess! Universal Mother! If this our meditated expedition is fitting in thy sight, vouchsafe us thine help and the signs of thy approbation." While repeating this invocation, they watch the head of the victim; if they observe tremulous or convulsive motions in the mouth and nostrils, it is to them the sign that Kali approves their expedition. When about to murder a traveller, if they hear or see any thing which, according to their superstitious notions, indicates evil, they allow him to pass on unmolested; but if the omen is esteemed good, they regard it as a positive command to murder him. In 1826, the East India Company adopted measures to suppress this system of wholesale murder. Since that time, between two and three thousand Thugs have been arrested, tried, and convicted. Two hundred and six were convicted at a single session of the court. It appeared, in the course of the evidence, that these prisoners, at different times, had murdered four hundred and forty persons. In view of these facts, who is prepared to carry out the doctrine, that it matters not what a man believes, if he is only sincere?

On the next page is a view of one of the most celebrated temples in India. It is devoted to the worship of Kali, and is situated at Kali Ghat, three miles from Calcutta. The small building on the left, and the other on the right, are temples of Shiva.

In Calcutta, the missionaries have established several schools, which are in a flourishing condition. The one under the superintendence of Rev. Dr. Duff is attended by more than a thousand young men, belonging to the most respectable families in the city. Kali Prasanna Mukarje, one of the young men educated at the mission schools, is a "Kulin Brahmin of the highest caste, and, on his mother's side, is a Holdar Brahmin. The Holdars are the original proprietors of Kali Ghat, and the hereditary officiating priests of the temple, to whom all the offerings at this shrine of idolatry belong. Kali Prasanna is heir to his mother's

property, being her only son; he is also heir to his uncle, who is a Zemindar, and one of the proprietors of the temple of Kali; and, by marriage, he is heir to his father-in-law's property. He is thus the only male representative of three ancient and highly-respectable families, and, by inheritance, would have been the principal proprietor of Kali Ghat and the high priest of the temple."



Besides what he was to inherit, he possessed property to the amount of about one hundred thousand dollars. He was fully aware that, should he become a Christian, he would, by the laws of his country, not only be deprived of his property, but would be despised by his countrymen, forsaken by his relatives, and regarded as an outcast. Yet he gave up all, was baptized, and became a member of one of the mission churches. At various missionary stations which I visited were several other Brahmins, who had forfeited their title to large estates by becoming Christians.

The figure on the left of the next engraving was found among some ruins in Behar. It is an image of Shiva, who, according to Hindu mythology, is the husband of Kali. He has eight arms and three eyes, one of which is in the centre of his forehead. The serpent with which he is decorated is rearing its head over his right shoulder. With one foot he is crushing an enemy in the act of drawing a sword; with two of his hands he is tossing a human

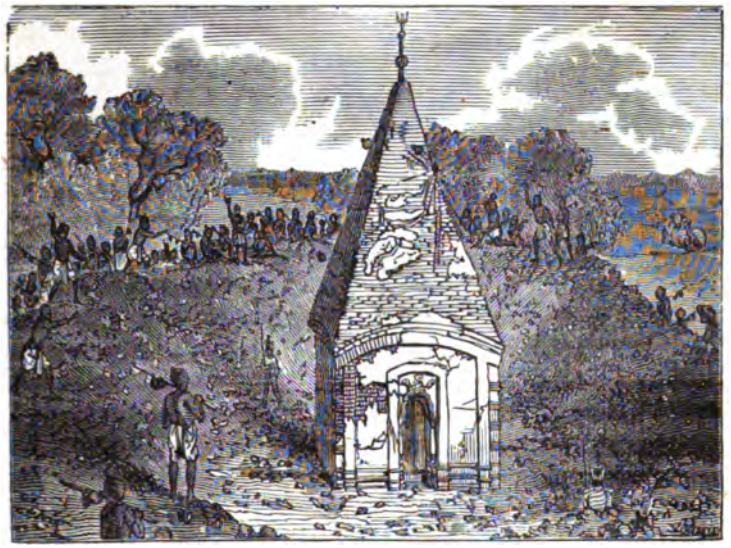
victim on the points of a trident; in a third he holds a drum, in a fourth an axe, in a fifth a sword, in a sixth a portion of the Vedas, and in a seventh a club, on the end of which is a human head.

The figure on the right was copied from a sculpture on the wall of a temple at Gaya. It has four legs, sixteen arms, and seven heads. Its girdle and crown are ornamented with heads. In each hand it has an animal on a plate, as if dressed for food. It is dancing on four men's bodies, two prostrated and two ready to be crushed. Above, beneath, and on each side, were armed female furies dancing on human carcasses; but these are not copied into the engraving. By the inhabitants of Gaya, this image is called *Mahamaya*, another name for Kali; but it is a male, and, perhaps, was originally intended to represent her husband, Shiva.

In the month of April, a festival in honor of Shiva is celebrated in almost every town and village. One of these festivals I witnessed in Calcutta. On the first day, at sunset, the worshippers assembled at different places, and danced, to the sound of drums and other rude and noisy music, before an image of Shiva. Then, one after another, they were suspended from a beam, with the head downward, over a fire. The next day, about five o'clock in the afternoon, each company reassembled and erected a stage

about ten feet in height, from which they threw themselves upon large knives. The knives being placed in a sloping position, the greater part of the thousands that fall upon them escape unhurt; but occasionally an individual is cruelly mangled. About forty persons threw themselves from one stage. None but the last appeared to receive much injury. He pretended to be killed, and was carried off with great shouting. During the whole of the night, Calcutta resounded with the sound of gongs, drums, trumpets, and the boisterous shouts of the worshippers. Early the next morning, forty or fifty thousand persons were assembled on the adjoining plain. Processions, accompanied by music, were passing and repassing in every direction. In the processions, many persons were daubed over with the sacred ashes of cows' ordure. Hundreds of these were inflicting self-torture. In one procession, I saw ten persons, each with more than a hundred iron pins inserted in the flesh. In another, each devotee had a cluster of artificial serpents fastened with iron pins to his naked back. In other processions, many had the left arm perforated, for the insertion of rods from five to fifteen feet in length. These rods were kept in constant and quick motion through the flesh, to increase the pain. Some had their tongues pierced, for the insertion of similar rods, which were occasionally drawn rapidly up and down through the tongue. One man, having a rod fifteen feet long, and, at the largest end, nearly one inch in diameter, commencing with the smaller end, drew the whole rod through his tongue. After wiping the blood from it upon his garment, he thrust it again into his tongue. Others were drawing living serpents through their tongues and dancing around like maniacs. In the streets through which the processions passed were devotees, with their sides pierced; a rope passed through each incision, and the ends of the two ropes were fastened to four stakes driven into the earth. In this condition, the infatuated creatures dance backward and forward, drawing the ropes, at each movement, through their lacerated flesh. On the afternoon of the next day, swinging machines were erected at the places of concourse. They consisted of a perpendicular post, about twenty-five feet high, upon the top of which was a transverse beam, balanced on its centre, and turning on a pivot. A rope was attached to one end of this beam, by which the other could be elevated or depressed at pleasure. From this end, many of the worshippers were suspended by iron hooks inserted into the muscular parts of their backs. I have in my possession a pair of hooks which have been

used for that purpose. These hooks I saw thrust into a man's naked back. The rope attached to them was made fast to the beam of the machine, by which he was lifted up twenty-five or thirty feet from the earth. It was then put in a circular motion on its pivot, and the poor sufferer made to swing with great rapidity for some minutes. Thousands and tens of thousands, annually, are thus cruelly tortured on these machines.



This is a temple of Shiva, which I saw near Allahabad. It is surrounded by a high mound, composed wholly of the fragments of earthen bottles. On one of the last days of February, from twenty to forty thousand pilgrims assemble, each being provided with two or three earthen bottles, containing water from the Ganges, and a few copper coins. Such is the offering they make to Shiva; and, believing him to be greatly pleased with the act, they dash and break the bottles against the temple. The next day, the Brahmins, faithful and true to Shiva, do not forget to pick up the money, and, as the trustees of the idol, keep it for him. That the temple may not be buried beneath the fragments of this novel offering, and that no coin may escape their vigilance, they also have the broken bottles removed to a short distance, where they had accumulated to the extent here represented. It cannot be difficult to understand why this peculiar mode of worship was invented by the Brahmins. It may also serve as an il-

lustration of the manner in which they take advantage of the credulity of the people and secure a large amount of property.

The two figures in this engraving are portraits of individuals whom I had the opportunity of frequently seeing. The one on the left is the portrait of a religious mendicant. The number of mendicants in India amounts to many hundreds of thousands. As a religious duty, they forsake their families and friends, renounce every useful occupation, and wander from place to place, begging their food. They are literally clothed with filth and rags; the latter, in many instances, being less in quantity than the former. Some of them are decorated with large quantities of false hair, strings of human bones, and artificial snakes. Others carry a human skull containing a most filthy mixture. If no money or food be given them by those persons of whom they solicit alms, they profess to eat the filth out of the skull, as an act of revenge. One sect of them, professing to be extremely anxious to avoid destroying animal life, carry a broom, composed of soft cotton threads, gently to sweep the insects from their path. They also erect hospitals for the reception of aged, sick, and lame animals. There is an institution of this kind in the vicinity of Bombay, which, in 1840, contained from fifty to one hundred horses, one hundred and seventy-five oxen and cows, and two hundred dogs, beside cats, monkeys, and reptiles. It has been said

that paganism never erected a hospital; but this is not quite true. I believe, however, that these are the only hospitals that have been erected by the worshippers of idols.

There is another sect of mendicants, who are worshippers of Krishna. Though men, they put on the dress and ornaments, and assume the manners, of milkmaids. This is supposed to be very pleasing to the object of their worship; for, when he was on earth, he is said to have been very partial to the milkmaids, and to have married no fewer than sixteen thousand of them.

The figure on the right of the engraving is a portrait of Puri-Suttema, an individual with whom I was well acquainted. For seven years he had been a religious mendicant. At length he read a Christian tract entitled "A Precept to the Inhabitants of this Part of the World, by the Missionaries." "By studying it," said he, "I found there was a great difference between the notions I had imbibed and the virtuous precepts contained in that book; I plainly saw that my former way was all deception, and that this book pointed out a better." He embraced that better way, and is now a preacher of the gospel.

Many religious mendicants subject themselves to various modes of self-torture. On the next page are portraits of three individuals, selected as specimens of this class of persons.

The devotee in the centre of the engraving I saw at a festival on the banks of the Ganges. He had kept his left arm thus elevated until it had become stiff and permanently fixed, the muscles and sinews had lost all power of producing motion, and the flesh had become withered. The finger-nails, as you perceive, had grown to the enormous length of six or eight inches. During my residence in Hindustan, I saw as many as nine persons with their arms elevated in the position here delineated.

The devotee at the right of the engraving has both arms elevated. This man I saw frequently in the city of Benares. In answer to my inquiries relative to his history, I was told that, in the earlier part of his life, he served as a soldier; but, having lost his right leg, he became unfit for the duties of the army. In order to secure a livelihood, as well as a large stock of religious merit, he turned devotee. Having substituted a wooden leg in the place of the one lost, he took a small idol in each hand, and elevated them above his head until his arms became perfectly stiff and immovable. He usually had several attendants, who believed themselves to be richly compensated for their services, by

the merit of administering to the wants of so holy a personage, and by sharing with him the food which he obtained by begging.

It may, perhaps, seem impossible, that a man should be able, by his own voluntary act, to keep his arms in this unnatural position. One would suppose that in sleep, at least, the limbs would resume their proper posture. In the first part of the process, it becomes necessary to fasten the arms to poles lashed to the body; but it requires no great length of time so to paralyze the muscles and sinews that they are no longer under the control of the mind.

The devotee at the left of the engraving I also frequently saw at Benares. Under a wretched shed on the bank of the Ganges, he had been standing, day and night, for eight years. He had nothing to lean against but a piece of bamboo suspended by cords from the roof of his shed. His dress was a ragged woollen blanket saturated with filth. His face was smeared with the sacred ashes, his body greatly emaciated, while his feet and legs were so dropsical and swollen as to require bandages to prevent their bursting. Sometimes he slept as he stood, but generally he was awake and busily employed in his devotions. In his right hand he held a string of wooden beads contained in a red bag. Hour after hour he repeated the names of the gods, and at each repetition passed a bead between his thumb and finger. Occasionally he laid aside his beads, and with his finger wrote, on a board covered with

ashes, the names of the idol gods upon whom he depended for happiness in a future life, as the reward of his self-inflicted miseries. In this manner he had spent the last eight years of his life. I asked him how long he intended to stand there. His reply was, "Until Gunga calls for me,"—meaning until death, when his body would be thrown into the River Gunga or Ganges.

On one occasion, I saw a devotee performing a pilgrimage to the Ganges in a manner somewhat peculiar. He prostrated himself at full length upon the ground, and, stretching forward his hands, laid down a small stone; he then struck his head three times against the earth, arose, walked to the stone, and, picking it up, again prostrated himself, as before; and thus continued to measure the road with his body. I was told by a missionary at Benares, that he had recently seen a devotee prostrating himself every six feet of the way towards the temple of Juggernaut, from which he was then four hundred miles distant, and that he was accompanied on his pilgrimage by a poor cripple, who, unable to walk, was crawling along on his hands and knees. Another devotee has been rolling upon the earth for the last nine years. He has undertaken to roll from Benares to Cape Comorin, a distance of one thousand five hundred miles, and more than half of the journey he has accomplished.

It is universally believed by the Hindus, that, if a man perform a pilgrimage, or swing upon hooks, or torture himself in any other manner, he will be rewarded for it, either in this life or in a future state of existence. No matter what the motive of the devotee may be; if he perform the service, he must receive the reward. As an illustration of this delusive theory, permit me to relate an anecdote from their sacred books.

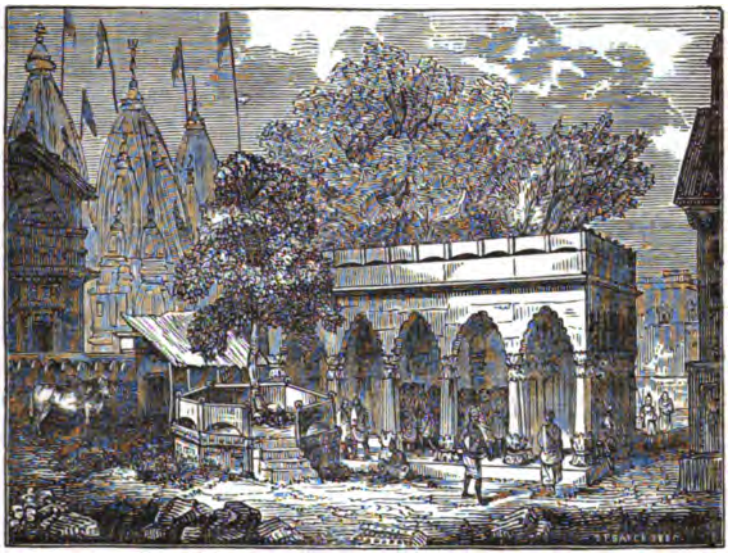
Narayan is the name of a Hindu god. A certain man, notoriously wicked, having a son of that name, was laid upon a sick-bed. In the hour of death, being parched with a fever, he called upon his son to give him water. The son being disobedient, the father called again in anger, and expired. The messengers of Yumu, the god of the infernal regions, immediately seized him, and would have dragged him to the place of torment, but they were prevented by the servants of Narayan, who took him by force and carried him to heaven. The messengers of Yumu, in great rage, hastened to their master and told him what had transpired. Yumu ordered his recorder to examine his books. He did so, and found that the man in question was a great sinner. Yumu then repaired in person to Narayan and demanded an explanation. Narayan

made this reply: "However sinful the man has been, in his last moments, and with his last breath, he repeated my name; and you, Yumu, ought to know that, if any man, either by design or accident, either in anger or derision, repeats my name with his last breath, he must go to heaven." The doctrine of this fable is literally and universally believed by the people. Hence, when a person is in the agonies of death, his friends exhort him to repeat the names of the gods; and, if he is so fortunate as to die with one of these names upon his lips, they consider it a sure passport to heaven. Many spend a large portion of their time in repeating the names of gods. Parrots are taught to do the same; and such a spokesman commands a great price, especially among business men, who imagine that, by owning such a parrot, their spiritual treasures are accumulating while they attend to their usual occupations.

The engraving on the next page is a view in Benares, the holy city of the Hindus. It is situated upon the River Ganges, about eight hundred miles from its mouth, and, with a population of two hundred thousand, is estimated to contain one thousand temples. Benares is not only celebrated for the number of its temples, and the benefits they are supposed to confer, but for the learning and sanctity of its Brahmins, for its schools of science and the arts, and, more especially, for its great antiquity. It is fabled to have been built by Shiva, of pure gold, but has long since degenerated into stone, brick, and clay, in consequence of the sins of the people. It is visited by more pilgrims than any other place in India. When travelling from Benares to Allahabad, a distance of only eighty miles, I estimated the number I saw by the way at twelve thousand, or one hundred and fifty to every mile.

The large building on the right, a part of which is to be seen, is a Mohammedan mosque. It stands upon the place once occupied by a very large and splendid Hindu temple, which contained an image of Shiva, said to have fallen on this spot from heaven. Soon after the commencement of the eighteenth century, Aurungzebe, a celebrated Mohammedan conqueror, demolished the temple and built this mosque. The Hindus say that the indignant idol, to escape the impious hands of the Mohammedans, while tearing down the temple, threw itself into a neighboring well. This circumstance rendered the water very holy and purifying. The well is in a spacious and beautiful pavilion, as represented near the centre of the engraving. It is built of stone, and consists of a

roof supported by four rows of columns. On the left of the pavilion are three temples of a pyramidical form. The one in the centre is esteemed the most holy temple in Benares, because it contains



the celebrated idol which concealed itself in the well. The Brahmins who officiate at this temple are also esteemed very holy. I will relate a few incidents illustrative of their character. They discovered that an aged pilgrim, who came there to worship, had a large sum of money about him. They told him that, if he would give them his money, and then, in the presence of the idol, cut his throat, the idol would immediately restore him to the vigor and freshness of youth. The deluded man believed them. He gave up all his money, entered the temple, called on the name of Shiva, and then cut his throat from ear to ear. Rev. Mr. Smith, who described to me this horrid transaction, saw him weltering in his blood. Mr. Smith also stated that, soon after he commenced his missionary labors in Benares, the Brahmins murdered a celebrated dancing girl in this temple, for the sake of the jewels which decorated her person. To prevent discovery, they cut off her head and threw it into the Ganges. They then cut her body into small pieces and strewed them about the streets, to be eaten by the dogs and vultures.

There are more than eight thousand religious mendicants in this city who live on charity. Those who belong to the sect called

Purumhunse have professedly attained to a state of perfection, and are worshipped as gods. They are readily distinguished by their long hair and beards, which are never trimmed or cleansed, and also by their dress, which is neither more comely nor substantial than that which was in fashion before garments were made by sewing together fig-leaves. These reputed gods sometimes come in contact with men who have not attained to their state of perfection. Some years since, Mr. Bird, an English magistrate of Benares, seeing a Purumhunse in his yard, ordered him to be gone, and threatened to horsewhip him if he ever saw him there again. A few days afterwards he came again, and found that Mr. Bird was faithful to his promise. The natives, who came running from every direction, were greatly enraged that an unholy foreigner should chastise one of their gods. Whatever power the whip may have had in exciting the wrath of this human god, still he did not dare to manifest it; for, had he uttered a single angry word, he would have lost all claim to perfection and divinity. He therefore said, with much apparent coolness and unconcern, "It is all right, it is perfectly right; for I recollect that, in a former birth, this magistrate was my donkey. I used to ride him beyond his strength, whip and abuse him, and now I am justly suffering for the sins thus committed."

The next engraving illustrates a custom which prevails in the northern part of Bengal. I allude to a species of infanticide. When an infant declines in health, the mother imagines that it is under the influence of an evil spirit, to appease whose wrath, she places her child in a basket and suspends it from the branch of a tree in which evil spirits are supposed to reside. The infant is generally visited and fed by its mother for three days. If it be not devoured by ants nor birds of prey, nor die through exposure to the cold and the rain, it is afterwards taken home. In the vicinity of Malda, an infant thus exposed fell from its basket and was immediately seized by a prowling jackal. Fortunately, the Rev. Mr. Thomas happened to pass that way just in time to prevent the child from being devoured. He had the satisfaction of presenting it alive to its mother. On another occasion, as he was passing under the same tree, he found a basket suspended from its branches containing the skeleton of an infant, the flesh having been devoured by the white ants.

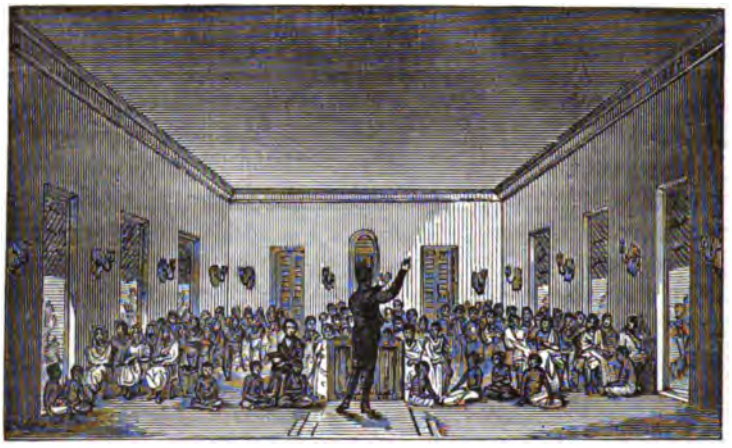
Among the Jerejas, a fierce and warlike tribe, who live in the north-west part of Hindustan, great numbers of female infants are

put to death immediately after birth. In one village, in which were twenty-two boys, not one girl was to be found. The villagers confessed that they had all been murdered. In another

village were found fifty-eight boys and only four girls; in another, forty-four boys and four girls; and, in many other villages, the number of boys exceeded that of the girls in nearly the same proportion.

The Jerejas have a tradition, that a curse was once pronounced by a holy Brahmin upon all of their tribe who should suffer their female children to live. To escape the effects of this curse, and to avoid the trouble and expense of bringing up their daughters, whom they regard as worthless, they are induced to imbrue their hands in their innocent blood. Mothers are the executioners of their own children. They either strangle them or poison them with opium. That they should be the agents in sustaining so horrid a custom is the more extraordinary when the fact is known that they were born and brought up among other tribes, where female infants are reared with comparative kindness. But such is the debasing influence of heathenism, that natural affection is extinguished, and all the kind sympathies of the maternal heart give place to the most savage ferocity. The infant, after it is destroyed, is placed naked in a small basket, and carried out and interred by one of the female attendants.

The subject of the following engraving is the interior of the mission chapel in the city of Cuttack, in the province of Orissa. It is an interesting fact, that this chapel stands upon the very spot where once stood a temple devoted to Shiva.



About one hundred miles south-west of Cuttack is the country of the Kunds. They worship a goddess called *Bhuenee.* To secure her blessing upon the soil they cultivate, they deem it important at certain times to offer human sacrifices upon her altars. The victims, who must be in the freshness and bloom of youth, are procured by stealing children from distant villages and rearing them until they become large enough to be acceptable to the goddess. At the time of sacrifice, the victim is tied to a post; the sacrificer, with an axe in his hand, slowly advances towards him, chanting to the goddess and her train the following hymn, which has been translated for me by Rev. Charles Lacy, one of the missionaries at Cuttack: —

"Hail, mother, hail! Hail, goddess Bhuenee!
Lo! we present a sacrifice to thee.
Partake thereof, and let it pleasure give,
And, in return, let us thy grace receive.
With various music on this festive day,
Lo! thee we honor, and thy rites obey.
Hail, all ye gods who in the mountain dwell,
In the wild jungle, or the lonely dell!
Come all together, come with one accord,
And eat the sacrifice we have prepared.
In all the fields and all the plots we sow,
O let a rich and plenteous harvest grow!

Ho, all ye gods and goddesses! give ear,
And be propitious to our earnest prayer.
Behold a youth for sacrifice decreed,
Blooming with tender flesh and flushed with blood!
No sire, no matron, rears him as a son;
His flesh, and blood, his life, and all, are thine.
Without the pale of sacred wedlock born,
We caught and reared him for thy rite alone.
Now, too, with rites from all pollution free,
We offer him, O Bhuenee! to thee."

As soon as this hymn is finished, with one blow of the axe the chest of the devoted youth is laid open. The sacrificer instantly thrusts in his hand and tears out the heart. Then, while the victim is writhing in the agonies of death, the multitude rush upon him, each one tearing out a part of his vitals or cutting off a piece of flesh from the bones; for, according to their superstitions, the pieces have no virtue unless they are secured before life is extinct. Immediately they hasten with their bloody treasure and bury it in their fields, expecting in this way to render them fruitful.

Please notice those boys sitting on the floor, according to native custom. There are ten of them, and they are Kunds. They had once been stolen from their parents, and were kept for the purpose of being sacrificed; and, had they not been rescued by the agents of the East India Company, they would have been destroyed in the manner just described. But now they attend the mission school during the week, and on the Sabbath they meet in this chapel to worship that God whose kind providence saved them from an early and cruel death.

Turn now to the young woman seated at the extreme left of the audience. She, also, when a child, was stolen from her parents and reserved for the slaughter. She was kept until she had attained her sixteenth year, and was rescued only four days before she was to have been offered in sacrifice. I heard the account of her sufferings from her own lips, and saw the scars made by the fetters with which she had been confined. But now she is a member of the mission church, and is exerting a happy influence in teaching others the way of life.

In the course of a few months, the agents of the East India Company rescued one hundred and eight children, whom the Kunds were preparing for sacrifice. It may with propriety be said, they were fattening them like beasts for the slaughter; for they believe that the goddess will not be pleased with the

sacrifice of young men and women, unless they are healthy and blooming. How different this from the blessed training of our children in the Sabbath school, that they may present their bodies a living sacrifice to God! What a contrast between Paganism and Christianity! Here a Christian chapel has literally been built upon the ruins of a heathen temple. It has also been rebuilt and enlarged, to accommodate the increasing number of worshippers, more than one hundred of whom are communicants. What has produced this change? Why are not the cruel rites of Shiva still performed upon this spot? The humble and unobtrusive missionary has proclaimed the simple doctrines of the cross, and the Divine Spirit has blessed his labors.

LECTURES ON INDIA,

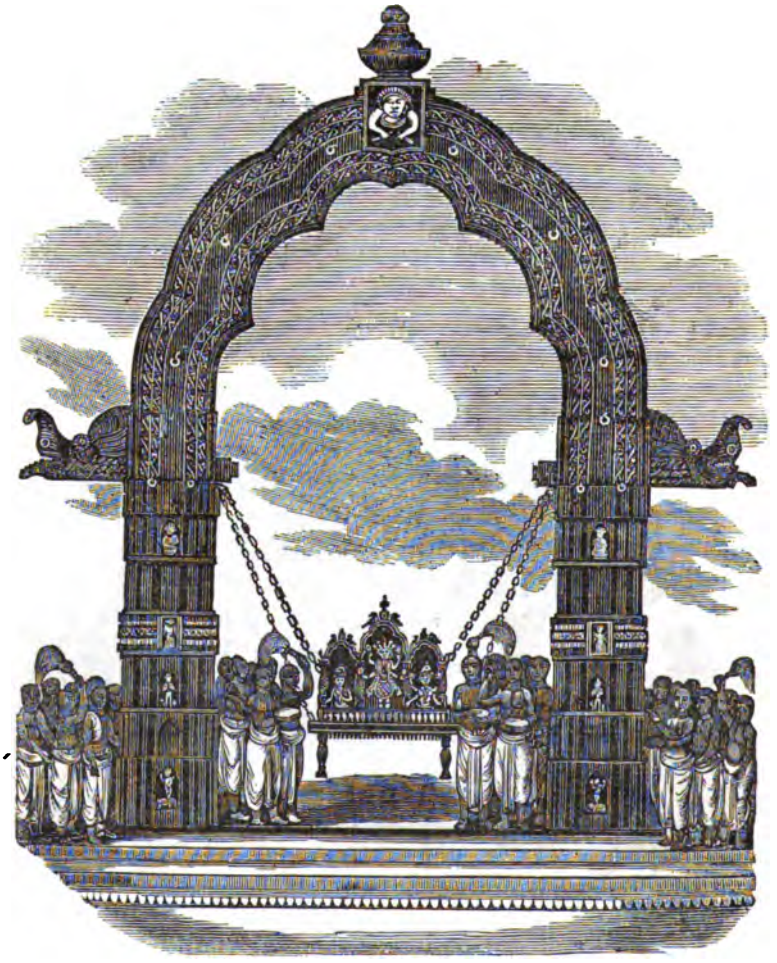
BY

CALEB WRIGHT.

THE AUTHOR HAS TRAVELLED MORE THAN 40,000 MILES FOR THE EXPRESS PURPOSE OF COLLECTING INFORMATION RESPECTING THE VARIOUS RACES OF PEOPLE WHOSE PECULIAR MANNERS, HABITS, AND SUPERSTITIONS, HE DESCRIBES.

LECTURE II.

PUBLISHED BY THE AUTHOR.



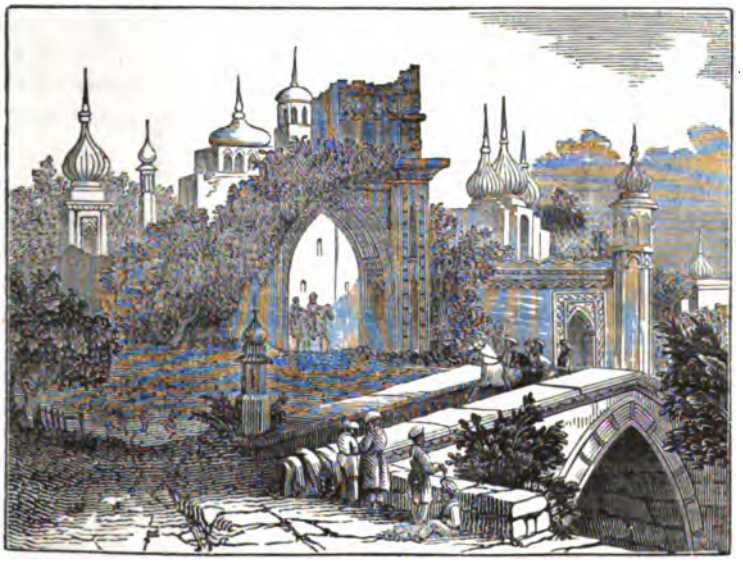
A RELIGIOUS CEREMONY AT THE TEMPLE OF JUGGERNAUT.

Krishna, accompanied by two other images, is brought out of the temple and suspended from a lofty stone arch, very curiously wrought. He is then swung by the Brahmins for his gratification, and the amusement of the worshippers. *See page* 247.

LECTURES ON INDIA.

LECTURE II.

THE attention of the traveller, in the south-western part of Asia, is frequently arrested by splendid edifices, and occasionally by large cities, long since deserted by their inhabitants. They were built by the Mohammedans, who, about the year one thousand, invaded India, and, by a long series of the most ferocious and cruel wars, established the great Mogul empire. This vast empire, and other extensive countries in Asia, have, within the last hundred years, been annexed to the British dominions.



RUINS IN DELHI, THE RESIDENCE OF THE MOGUL EMPERORS.

The lofty arched gateway, in the engraving, once served as the principal entrance to a palace. Delhi is supposed to have been founded about three hundred years before the Christian era. In the course of a few centuries, it became the largest and most

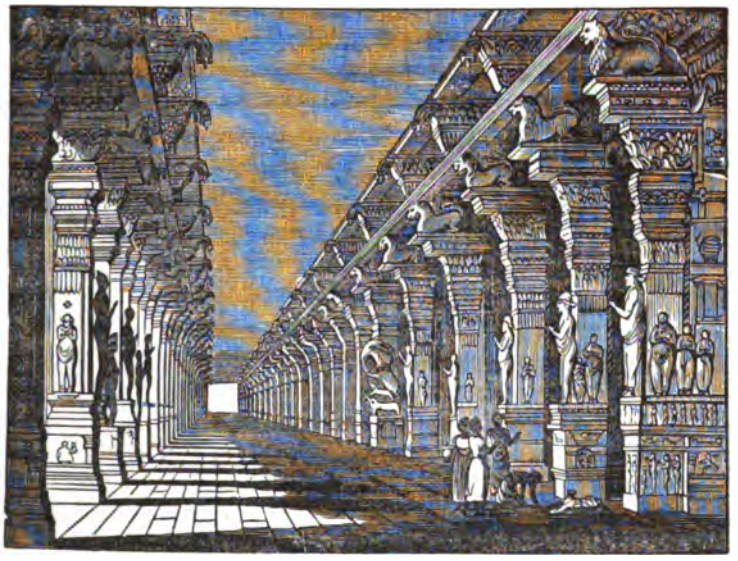
magnificent city in India. In 1398, Tamerlane, having slaughtered great numbers of the unoffending Hindus in battle, and murdered one hundred thousand who had surrendered as prisoners of war, besieged Delhi. The city surrendered, was pillaged and almost destroyed. Delhi, however, not only recovered from this calamity, but attained to still greater splendor and magnificence than at any former period. In 1739, in the height of its prosperity, and when its population was estimated at two millions, it was taken by Nadir Shah. He extorted one hundred and thirty millions of dollars, as a ransom for the city, collected, in jewels and other valuable property, to the amount of two hundred and seventy-five millions, and massacred one hundred and twenty thousand of the inhabitants. Since that time, Delhi has been pillaged and laid waste by other rapacious conquerors, until it has become almost depopulated. The part now inhabited is only seven miles in circuit, while the ruins cover a space much larger than the city of London.

On a high, rocky eminence, commanding an extensive view of the city and surrounding ruins, is a very beautiful mosque, built by one of the Mohammedan emperors. It is of an oblong form, two hundred and sixty-one feet in length. Its walls, which are of marble, are surmounted by three magnificent domes of the same material, and at each end is a lofty minaret rising to the height of one hundred and thirty feet.

For the purpose of procuring the praise of men and the favor of the gods, Rajahs, and other opulent natives, have, in many of the large towns, built choultries, or inns, for the gratuitous accommodation of travellers. The choultry of Rajah Trimal Naig, at Madura, represented on the next page, consists of one vast hall, three hundred and twelve feet long and one hundred and twenty-five wide. The ceiling is supported by six rows of columns twenty-five feet high. The entire edifice is composed of a hard, gray granite, and every part of its surface is elaborately carved into representations of cows, monkeys, tigers, lions, elephants, men, women, giants, gods, and monsters.

Choultries generally have but one apartment, and are entirely destitute of furniture of every kind. The ground, beaten hard, and covered with lime cement, serves as a floor, which, at night, is strewed with travellers of all classes and of both sexes, wrapped separately in their various-colored cotton cloths, and lying side by side like so many bales of merchandise in a warehouse. As

choultries are much of the time unoccupied, they become the favorite resort of bats, monkeys, rats, and serpents. Of these troublesome creatures, the rats are the most annoying, for, while the travellers are asleep, they eat the skin from the soles of their



feet, so as often to make it difficult for them to walk for some days afterwards. "I was awoke, and astonished, one night," says a missionary, "by something tugging at my ear. It was a rat. The moment I stirred, my visitant made good his retreat; had my sleep been more sound, I should probably have suffered severely." At another time, as he was sleeping in a choultry, he was awoke by the cry of "Pambu! pambu!"—"A serpent! a serpent!" His bearers were on the alert; — the serpent had passed between them and himself without biting any one. Having ascertained that it was not the cobra, which their superstitious reverence will not allow them to destroy, they killed it, and found it was a species of viper whose bite is fatal. The cobra, and various other reptiles, receive religious homage. Inanimate objects are also deified. Of this numerous class of divinities is the Ganges. The Shasters, which are regarded with as much reverence by the Hindu as the Bible is by the Christian, contain these passages: —

"If a person has been guilty of killing cows* or Brahmins, only let him touch the water of the Ganges, desiring the remis-

* See page 174.

sion of these sins, and they will immediately be forgiven." And "bathing in the Ganges, accompanied by prayer, will remove all sin." Millions of the Hindus, at a great expense of time, health, and morals, perform pilgrimages to the Ganges. Multitudes travel from five hundred to a thousand miles, and are absent from their home and business five or six months at a time. The Rev. Mr. Thompson, a Baptist missionary, informed me that, on one occasion, he saw more than three hundred thousand pilgrims assembled at Hurdwar, to bathe at the place where Brahma, the creator of the world, is said to have performed his ablutions. At two o'clock in the morning, when it was announced by the Brahmins that the propitious time for the ceremony had arrived, the immense multitude rushed down a flight of steps into the Ganges. Those who first entered the water and bathed, attempted to return, but the passage continued to be wedged up with the dense mass of those who were still descending. There were, indeed, other passages by which they might have returned, but that would not do; it was not the custom. To return by another way would diminish the merit of the bathing. They endeavored, therefore, to force their way upward. Consequently a scene of great violence took place, which resulted in the death of six hundred persons.

On the next page is a view of the junction of the Ganges and Jumna. It is believed that every person, of either sex, who, immediately after being shaved, bathes at the point of land where those two rivers unite, will be permitted to dwell in heaven as many years as the number of hairs removed by the razor. To obtain immediate admission there, many thousands of the pilgrims have drowned themselves here.

The strip of land extending from the point at the junction of the rivers to the Fort of Allahabad, on the right of the engraving, is a desolate waste; but during an annual festival, which I witnessed here, it was crowded with tents, and huts, and more than one hundred thousand pilgrims. On entering this vast encampment, I saw several missionaries, who, in a small shed by the wayside, were preaching the gospel and distributing tracts. A little beyond was the bazaar, or market, where food and various kinds of merchandise were exposed for sale. In a conspicuous place, near the bazaar, was a man seated upon a mat, and surrounded by roots, herbs, lizard-skins, and dried snakes; professing the ability, like the empirics of more enlightened lands, to

cure incurable diseases, and set death at defiance. In another part of the encampment were about three hundred religious mendicants. Many of them were worshipping small images. One commenced his devotions by ringing a bell, to arouse his gods and secure their attention. He then, for more than an hour,

stood on one foot, repeating incantations. Another, having crossed his ankles on the back of his neck, was worshipping his idols.

In the engraving, a barrier or fence is to be seen extending from the Ganges to the Jumna. Soldiers were stationed there, to prevent the pilgrims from passing it, until they had purchased of the East India Company tickets granting permission to bathe. Near the barrier, I saw three devotees, who had held the left arm elevated above the head until it had become immovable, and the finger nails had grown to the length of six or eight inches. A portrait of one of them is to be seen on page 20, of the first lecture. As I approached the point, I saw two or three hundred barbers employed in shaving the heads and bodies of the pilgrims preparatory to bathing. I also witnessed a very shrewd method of getting rid of sin. The person who wished to become perfect took in his right hand some money and a few blades of a particular grass, esteemed sacred. Then, with the same hand, he grasped the tail of a cow, while a Brahmin poured on it some water from the Ganges and repeated an incantation. The money,

as a matter of course, was given to the Brahmin; the sins were reputed to pass along the tail of the animal, the grass and the deception remained to the pilgrim. Cows were stationed at six or eight places for the convenience of performing this ceremony.

I next visited the point, and found the water, for a considerable distance, crowded with the pilgrims. To bathe at this particular spot was the great object of the pilgrimage.

Here is a sick man, brought to the Ganges to die. His friends have carried him into the sacred stream, and are performing the last fatal rite. It consists in pouring a large quantity of water down his throat; filling his mouth and nostrils with mud; repeating the names of the gods, and shouting, "O mother Ganges, receive his soul!" Thus the sick, instead of receiving medical treatment, kind nursing, and appropriate nourishment, are, in many cases, hurried away to the Ganges, to be purified from their sins, by dying on its banks or in its waters. In Calcutta alone, nineteen hundred sick persons have, in the course of one month, been brought to the Ganges to die. Some are suffocated by filling the mouth and nostrils with mud; others are left where the rising tide will sweep them away.

It is a remarkable fact, that when the sick are brought to the river-side to die, they cannot legally be restored to health. They are regarded by the Hindu law as already dead. Their prop-

erty passes to their heirs, and in the event of recovery, which sometimes happens, they become outcasts. Their nearest relatives will neither eat with them nor show them the smallest favor. They are held in utter abhorrence, and are allowed to associate only with persons in similar circumstances. I have seen a large village, inhabited entirely by these wretched beings.

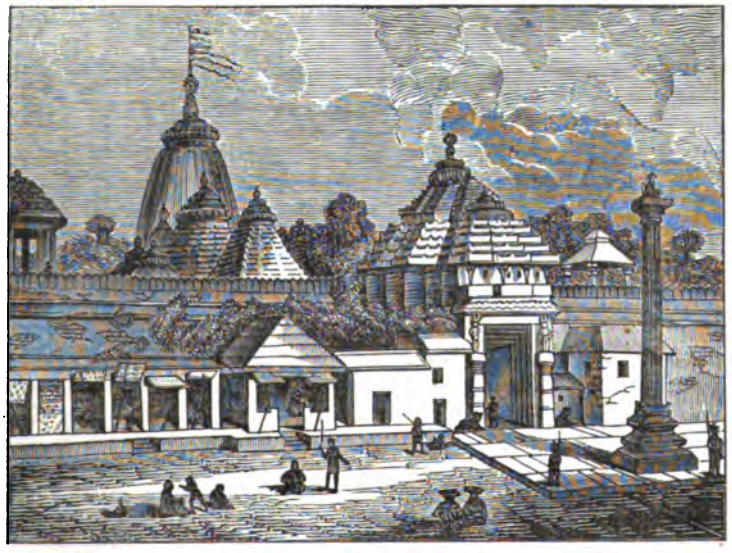
Great numbers of the dead are thrown into the Ganges, that their souls may be purified. It has been officially stated that, in the course of one month, more than a thousand human bodies have been seen floating on the surface of the Ganges, in the immediate vicinity of Calcutta. At that place, and as far as its waters are agitated by the tide, it contains so much earthy matter and other impurities, that no object can be seen at the distance of two inches below its surface. Yet the inhabitants of the city use the water of this river for drinking and culinary purposes, and the numerous merchant vessels trading there are supplied with it for the homeward voyage.

Pilgrims carry water from the Ganges into every part of India, to be used for religious and medicinal purposes. It is put up in glass bottles. These are packed in baskets, and suspended from the ends of a bamboo which rests upon the pilgrim's shoulder. I have frequently seen the roads thronged with pilgrims thus accoutred. They resembled an immense army on the march. You will see one of them in the first engraving on the next page. He has stopped by the wayside, near Balasore, to worship certain stones, an accurate representation of which you see in the engraving. There are his baskets filled with bottles of Ganges water. Having made his *salam*, he mutters a few words in a careless manner, and then takes a bottle of water from one of his baskets, and pours a small quantity of it upon the stones. To appease the wrath, or to procure the favor of divinities like these, splendid festivals are instituted. About ten o'clock at night, the worshippers assemble. By the glare of flaming torches, and amid the shouts and loud peals of barbarous music, great numbers of swine, sheep, goats, and buffaloes, are sacrificed. Many of the worshippers throw themselves upon the ground, and wallow in the pools of warm blood flowing from the slaughtered animals. Then, leaping upon their feet, reeking with gore and filth, they jump and frolic, and twist themselves into the most wanton attitudes, and vociferate the most indecent songs, for the gratification of the image, or the rough stone before which these acts of worship are performed.

A Pilgrim at his Devotions.

Here we have a scene in the house of a wealthy native, at the celebration of a festival in honor of Ganesa, the god of wisdom. Ganesa is represented as a very corpulent man, of a red color, with four arms, and the head of a white elephant. In front of him is a rat, upon the back of which he is said to perform his

journeys. The men on the right are musicians. For the gratification of the idol, and the multitude of assembled worshippers, a dancing girl is performing. She is clad in garments of the finest texture, and of the most brilliant colors, and is decorated with a profusion of costly ornaments. Her movements are slow and monotonous, and occasionally very indecent, and her songs are plentifully spiced with amorous allusions. After singing and dancing for some hours, her place is supplied, either by others of the same class, or by playactors, jugglers, or mountebanks; and the performance is thus continued from ten o'clock till sunrise. Many of the dancing girls belong to the temples, and are called the wives of the gods. At an early age they are united in wedlock to the images worshipped in the temples. This strange matrimonial connection is formed in compliance with the wishes of the parents, who believe it to be a highly meritorious act to present a beautiful daughter, in marriage, to a senseless idol, and thus doom her to a life of vice and infamy. Dancing is deemed so disreputable by the Hindus that none engage in it but the most dissolute and abandoned. Here, as in other countries, there appears to be an intimate connection between dancing and licentiousness.



Here is the celebrated temple of Juggernaut, situated at Puri, on the western shore of the Bay of Bengal. There are many temples of Juggernaut, in various parts of the country, but this is

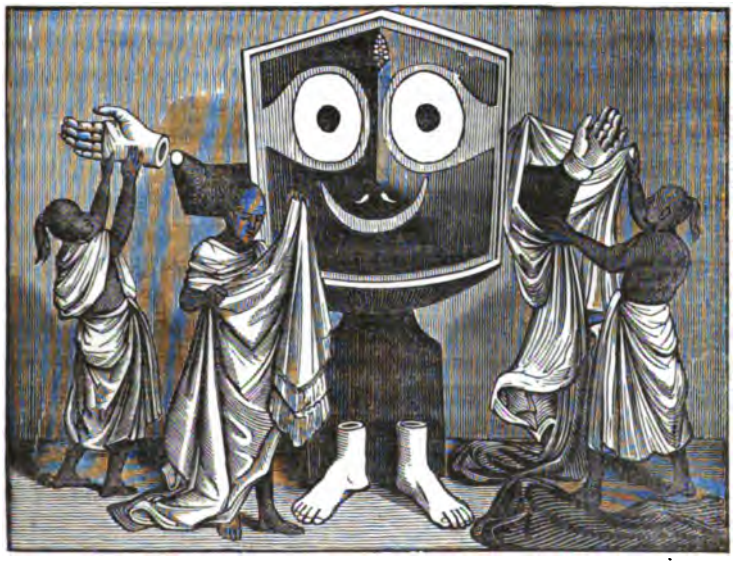
the largest, and is deemed the most holy. The principal edifice rises to the elevation of two hundred feet. In the two adjacent buildings, morning and evening, the dancing girls display their professional skill, for the amusement of the idols enthroned in the large edifice. There, also, three times a day, large quantities of the choicest food are presented to these wooden images. The people are taught that the appetite of these gods is perfectly satisfied by smelling and seeing the food at a distance. This is a remarkably fortunate circumstance, since the Brahmins always take what the idols leave.

The wall which surrounds the temple is about twenty feet high, and forms an enclosure six hundred and fifty feet square. On each side of the square is a gateway. The gateway in the engraving is through the base of a highly-ornamented tower. The small buildings, in front of the wall, are the shops of merchants, where clothing and ornaments are exposed for sale. The column on the right is a very beautiful specimen of architecture. The shaft, which is thirty feet high, is composed of a single stone. The figure on the top is an image of Huneman, a deified monkey.

The only foreigner who ever saw the inside of this temple was an English officer, who, about thirty years since, succeeded in gaining admission, by painting and dressing himself like a native. When the Brahmins discovered that their holy place had been thus defiled, they became so enraged that all the English residing at the station were obliged to flee for their lives. Suspecting their pursuers to be more desirous of gratifying their avarice than their revenge, they strewed silver money by the way, and, while the natives stopped to pick it up, they gained time, and succeeded in reaching a place of safety.

Twelve festivals are annually celebrated here in honor of Juggernaut. The most important of these are the bathing and the car festivals. These I witnessed, and there were present more than one hundred and fifty thousand pilgrims. Nearly half were females. There is not only great suffering among the multitude of pilgrims who, from distant places, attend these festivals, but many of them die in consequence of excessive fatigue, exposure to the annual rains, and the want of suitable and sufficient food. The plains, in many places, are literally whitened with the bones of the pilgrims, while dogs and vultures are continually devouring the bodies of the dead. Rev. Mr. Lacy informed me that, in 1825, he counted ninety dead bodies in one

place, and that his colleague, at the same time, counted one hundred and forty more in another place. Great numbers perish on their way home. The pilgrim, on leaving Puri, has a long journey before him, and his means of support are often almost, if not entirely, exhausted. The rainy season has now commenced, and at every step his naked feet sink deep in the mud. At length, exhausted by hunger and fatigue, he sits down by the side of the road, unable to proceed any farther. His companions, regarding only their own safety, leave him to his fate. Dogs, jackals, and vultures, gather around him, watching his dying struggles; and in a few hours his flesh has disappeared, and his bones lie bleaching on the plain. Since the erection of this temple, in the twelfth century, such has been the fate of millions.

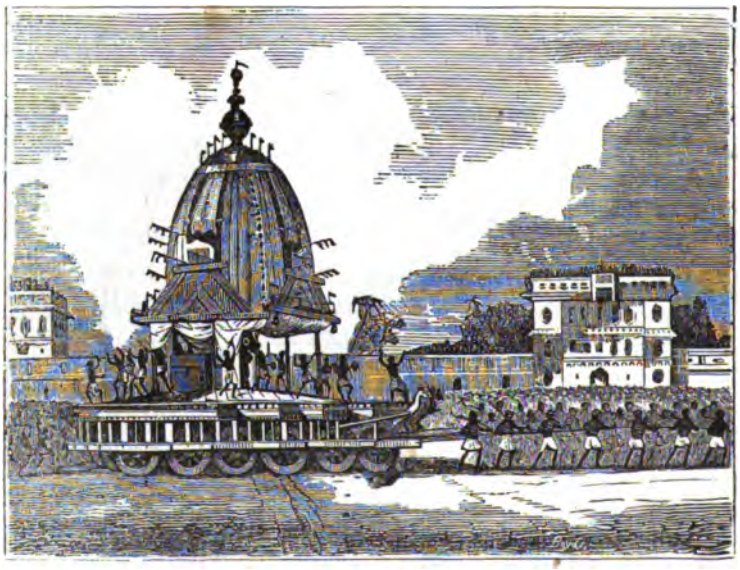


Here is a portrait of Juggernaut. I have taken his portrait as I saw him in the morning, while the Brahmins were making his toilet. He appeared to be well supplied with fine Cashmere shawls and valuable jewels, and the Brahmins were so arranging them as to display the beauties of his person to the best advantage. In the evening he is entirely disrobed, and his shawls and jewels, and also his hands and feet, which are made of gold, are carefully locked up in a strong box. This precaution is not through fear that the idol will convey himself away in the night, but to secure these treasures from thieves. Nor is the strong box

always a sufficient security, for on one occasion, upon opening it in the morning, jewels to the value of some thousands of dollars had disappeared.

To some, perhaps, it may seem impossible for the human mind to become so debased as to worship an object having no higher claims to homage than this; but, strange as it may seem, this monstrous form has received, and still receives, the adoration of a large portion of the human race.

At one of the annual festivals, Juggernaut and two other images, said to be his brother and sister, are drawn out upon huge cars.



This is the car of Juggernaut. The platform on which the image is placed is thirty-four feet square, and is supported by sixteen wheels, six and a half feet in diameter. The upper part is covered with English broadcloths in alternate stripes of red and yellow. Near the idol is the strong box in which his hands, feet, jewels, and clothing are deposited at night. Six ropes, or cables, are attached to the car, six inches in diameter and three hundred feet in length, by means of which the people draw it from place to place. A devotee has cast himself under the wheels to be crushed to death. As a reward for this act of devotion, he expects to enjoy health, riches, and honors in the next life.

The car festival, which I witnessed at Puri, commenced on the Sabbath. I went to the temple, about two o'clock in the after-

noon, just as the pilgrims, who had encamped in great numbers in the vicinity, were beginning to assemble. From an elevated position, on an elephant, I saw them pouring in from every direction, until four o'clock, when the concourse became immense. Every street and avenue leading to the temple was thronged, and the flat roofs of the houses were also densely crowded with anxious spectators. About five o'clock, a company of men proceeded from the temple, making a horrid din with drums, gongs, and trumpets. Next came the idols, shaded by umbrellas of state and attended by various emblems of royalty. The vast multitude greeted them with loud and long-continued shouts. Juggernaut, and his brother and sister, were now to mount their cars; but from the infirmities of age, or some more obvious cause, they submitted to the awkward expedient of being dragged through the mud to their elevated seats, by the aid of ropes and Brahmins. A variety of ceremonies followed, but, as it was growing late, I returned to my lodgings.

At sunrise the next morning, the gates of the town were thrown open, to admit the beggars. As they passed, I was informed by the English magistrate, by whose order they were admitted, that their number probably exceeded fifty thousand. They were the most weary, ragged, filthy, wretched-looking objects I ever saw. They had been prevented from entering the town at an earlier period, because of their inability to pay the tax which the *Honorable* East India Company demanded of their heathen subjects for the privilege of seeing their idols. The Company, I ascertained, had, in the preceding thirty-four days, received fifty-five thousand dollars as admission fees. Having already extorted so large a sum from the richer pilgrims, they could well afford, now that a part of the festival was over, to admit gratuitously those from whom no money could be extorted. It affords me much pleasure to say that this unrighteous source of gain has recently been abolished. The multitude of beggar pilgrims hastened onward to the cars, and appeared to be lost in the much larger multitude there assembled.

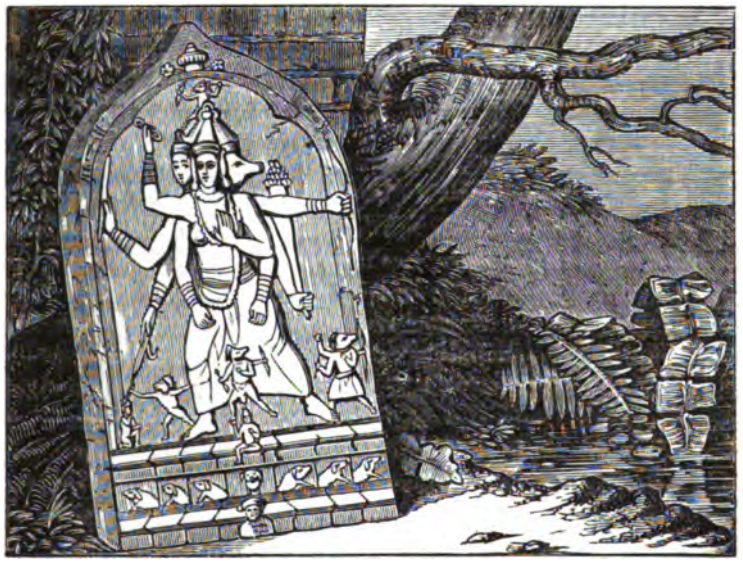
Hearing the tumultuous sound of many voices at a distance, I looked towards the place from which it came, when I saw about a thousand men advancing, with green branches elevated in their hands. They rushed forward, leaping through the crowd, and, with mighty shoutings, seized the ropes of one of the cars, and dragged it forth in triumph. Soon other companies, in a similar manner, dashed forward and put the two remaining cars in motion.

The pilgrims are taught to believe that the cars are not moved and guided by the strength of the men who pull at the ropes, but by the will and pleasure of the idols. This being admitted, it must be that Juggernaut made a grand mistake, for he ran his car against a house, and was not able to extricate himself until the afternoon of the next day. But perhaps he was merely in a surly mood, for they believe that the cars move only when the idols are pleased with the worship. So, if for any reason a car stops, they suppose that the idol thus expresses his disapprobation. One of the priests then steps forward to the front of the platform, as here represented, rehearses the deeds and extols the character of the idol, in a manner the most obscene. No person, educated in a Christian country, can possibly conceive expressions so debasing and abominable as are used on such occasions. Should the speaker quote from the Shasters, or invent an expression more than usually lascivious, the multitude give a shout, or rather a sensual yell. The men again pull, with renewed energy, at the ropes, the idol is supposed to be delighted, and the car is permitted to move on. When dragged a short distance farther, it is stopped again by a priest, who slyly clogs one of the wheels. Then another scene of pollution is acted out with all its debasing influence upon the mind and morals of the people. In this manner, eight days are spent in drawing the car about two miles.

In one of the apartments of Juggernaut's temple, there is a golden image of Luckshme, the wife of Juggernaut. Near midnight, on the fourth day of the car festival, it was brought out of the temple, on a splendid litter, borne on the shoulders of men. Preceded by a band of rude music, and men bearing flaming torches, they soon approached the cars, when Luckshme was presented directly in front of Juggernaut, her husband. Immediately the whole multitude appeared to be in a perfect rage, and rent the air with the most violent and clamorous yells. The women, who at this time were unusually numerous, appeared to be by far the most excited. In the midst of these dreadful yells, which had now continued several minutes, one of the priests took a garland of flowers from Juggernaut, and placed it around the neck of his wife. She was then borne off towards the temple, and the clamor ceased.

I inquired the meaning of this strange and terrific ceremony. The reply was, that on the first day of the festival, Juggernaut had eloped with his sister. That, on the fourth, his wife heard of

it, and, being stung with jealousy, determined on revenge. Accordingly, she set out in hot pursuit of her unfaithful spouse; and, having overtaken him at this place, she had given him a sound scolding. The shouting and yelling of the multitude was merely the effect of sympathy, they joining in the chorus with the scolding wife. This accounts for the active part which the women took in this ceremony. Juggernaut, like other penitent husbands who have scolding wives, promises to do better in future, and Luckshme is persuaded to be reconciled and to return home.

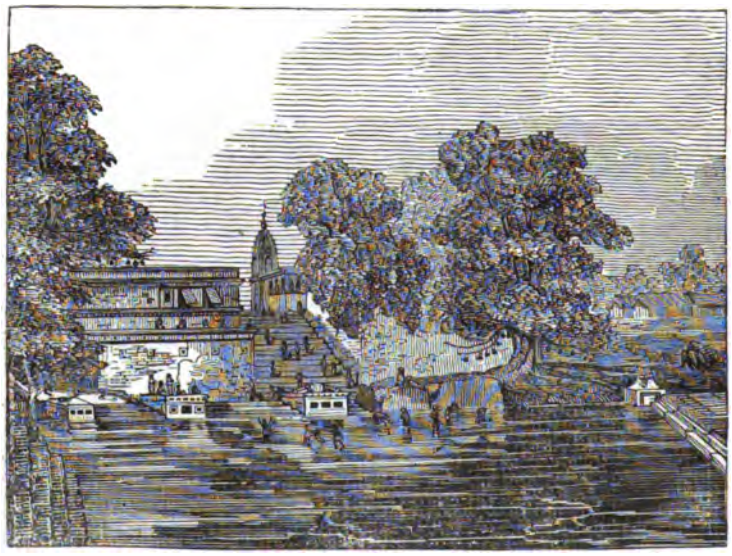


Luckshme, copied from an Ancient Sculpture.

You will readily perceive that this festival exerts a most pernicious influence upon the community. The ceremonies are not only foolish, but most polluting in their tendencies and effects. Here crimes of the foulest character are sanctioned by the conduct of their supreme god. It is not, therefore, a matter of surprise that impurity, and all its kindred abominations, pervade the land. Let us, who live in this Christian country, thank God for the revelation of his own glorious character; and while we bless him for the Bible, and for all those spiritual influences which have made us to differ from the heathen, shall we not strive to send them the gospel? Freely we have received; freely let us give.

On the next page is a view near the city of Benares. The

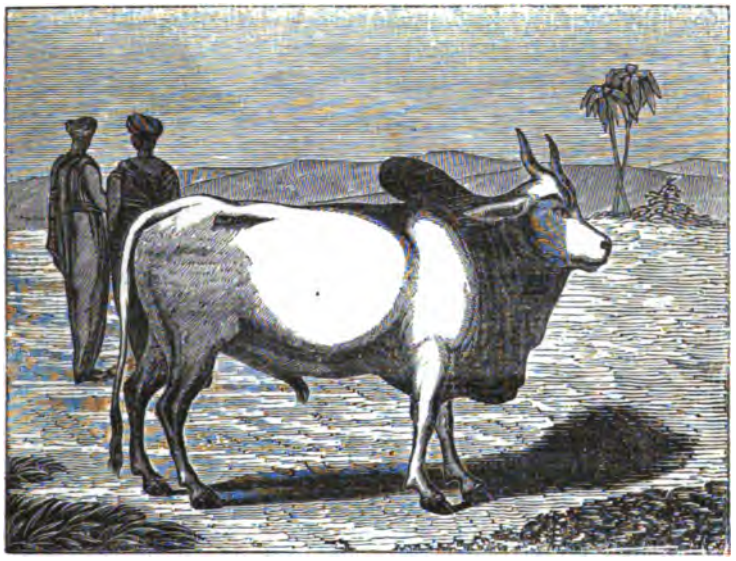
building at the right of the ghat, or flight of steps, is a temple of Shiva. The one on the left is a resting-place for pilgrims. The water is in a tank about two hundred feet square. In November, about one hundred thousand persons assemble around this tank, to perform a variety of ceremonies for the benefit of the souls of deceased relatives.



The pepul-trees, in the engraving, are supposed to be the favorite resort of such departed spirits as, from various causes, have not yet been clothed with new bodies. While I was engaged in taking a drawing of this place, several of the natives came and put lighted lamps in the earthen pots which you see suspended from the branches of the trees. On inquiring of one why he did so, he replied, "That the soul of my relative may be in light." I asked him how he knew whether the soul of his relative was in darkness or light. He said, "It is impossible for me to know that. But it is our custom, when one of the family dies, to suspend an earthen pot from a pepul-tree, and for ten successive days to bring offerings of water and rice, with a lighted lamp, for the benefit of the departed. On the tenth day, we break the pot, and make a feast for the Brahmins." In Calcutta, I witnessed a feast of this character, made by a wealthy merchant for the benefit of his deceased mother. The number of guests was estimated at two hundred thousand, and the expense of the feast, together

with the presents made, was estimated at seventy-five thousand dollars.

The efficacy of one of the numerous ceremonies for the benefit of deceased relatives is supposed to depend very much upon the place where it is performed. If performed at a certain temple in the town of Guyah, it is supposed that inconceivable benefits will be conferred upon the deceased. The East India Company, seizing upon this superstitious feeling, have until recently made it a source of revenue by imposing a tax upon all who perform this ceremony at Guyah. The tax collected at that temple amounted to about one hundred and twelve thousand dollars annually.



One of Shiva's Cattle.

Ceremonies for the repose of the soul are exceedingly numerous; but I will mention only one more. The son of the deceased procures one male and four female calves. These are tied to five posts, near an altar, constructed for the occasion. Four learned Brahmins sit on the four sides of the altar, and offer a burnt sacrifice. A fifth Brahmin reads certain passages in the Shasters, to drive away evil spirits. The son washes the tail of the male calf, and with the same water presents a drink-offering to his deceased ancestors. The male and the four female calves are then gravely united in wedlock. During the marriage ceremony, many formulas are repeated, in which the parties are recommended to culti-

vate love and mutual sympathy. The Brahmins, having performed the duties of their sacred office, are dismissed with presents, including the three brides; but the bridegroom is dedicated to Shiva, and allowed to run at large until old age carries him off. These vagrant calves may almost be said to constitute one of the numerous orders of religious mendicants, or holy beggars. As no provision is made for their daily wants, and as they are under the necessity of securing their living, they become very cunning, and are scarcely less impudent than the bipeds constituting the other orders of that fraternity. It is not uncommon for them to walk up, unbidden, to the stalls where vegetables are for sale, and help themselves. Being esteemed sacred, the poor deluded inhabitants dare to use only the most gentle means of ridding themselves of their unprofitable customers. During the first year or two, these cattle fare rather scantily; but, after having learned their sacred functions, they live well, and are the fattest and best-looking of all the animals to be seen in Hindustan.

The Shasters teach that the souls of the departed are divided into five classes. Those of the first class reunite with Brahm, the Eternal Spirit, and thus lose their individuality. The second are admitted to the various heavens of the gods. The third are punished in places of torment. The fourth again become the offspring of human parents. The fifth become beasts, birds, and insects. Hence, should a Hindu inhale an insect with his breath, he knows not but, in so doing, he has swallowed some departed relative — possibly his own father. There is one sect, who, to prevent so horrid a catastrophe, wear a strainer over the mouth.

Hinduism leads its votaries into the wildest and most absurd vagaries in regard to omens, dreams, visions, evil spirits, and witches. In the vicinity of Puna, a person dreamed that the cholera, then raging in his village, was inflicted by a certain woman commissioned by Zurremurre, the goddess of the cholera. The villagers, on hearing this, immediately assembled and put her to death. In Orissa, a woman was told by her priest that Kali, the goddess whom she worshipped, had appeared to him in a vision, and had commanded him to inform her that she must sacrifice her only child. In the night, while he slept, she cut off his head, and gave it to the priest as an offering to the idol. In Nagpore, several persons died suddenly, which led many to believe that they had been destroyed by witchcraft. They therefore employed a man, who professed to be skilled in the art of magic,

to discover the authors of their death. He put some oil and rice into a leaf, and began to repeat the name of each person belonging to the village. When he called the name of a certain woman, the oil, as he said, ran through the leaf. This circumstance was regarded as sufficient proof of her guilt. She was immediately seized, and whipped until death ended her sufferings. The death of the favorite wife of Rajah Zelim Singh, of Kotah, being attributed to witchcraft, he sentenced four hundred women to be put into sacks and thrown into a tank. It is stated by General Malcolm, in an official report, that, in the province of Malwa alone, in the course of thirty years, between two and three thousand females had been put to death for the imputed crime of witchcraft.

Many of the Hindus believe that those persons who commit suicide become malignant spirits delighting in every kind of mischief.

The scene represented in the engraving occurred in Ghazepore. A man persuaded his wife to permit him to burn her alive, that her soul might be transformed into an evil spirit, for the purpose of haunting and tormenting one of their neighbors, who had offended them. In Calcutta, a servant, having quarrelled with his master, hung himself, in the night, in front of the street door, that he might become a devil and haunt the premises. The

house was immediately forsaken by its occupants, and, though a large and beautiful edifice, suffered to go to ruin.

In Mirzapoor, a Brahmin took his own child, an infant about fifteen months old, from the arms of its mother, and, holding it by the legs, dashed its head against the ground, that it might become an evil spirit and torment a certain person by whom he imagined himself injured. Another little girl was, by her own father, beheaded with an axe. Another was stabbed to the heart, with a dagger, and her bleeding body thrown at the door of the person upon whom the murderer sought to be revenged. I could give the particulars of many other murders which have been committed for similar purposes.

Here is a group of women engaged in various occupations. One is smoking tobacco. Another is spinning cotton. A third is preparing the thread for the weavers by winding it on a spool. A fourth is preparing the cotton for spinning. A fifth is grinding, upon a flat stone, cayenne pepper, garlic, ginger, and turmeric. These, when stewed with a cucumber or melon, serve as a seasoning for their boiled rice, which, in many parts of India, constitutes more than seven eighths of the entire food of the inhabitants. The woman with the large brass pot is carrying home water for household use. The next is returning from her morning ablution in the Ganges, with her hair spread upon her shoulders to dry

In her left hand are two brass pots, which she has scoured by rubbing them with the mud of the river. Children are never carried in the arms; they sit astride on the hip. The woman carrying the child is going to market with a bundle of wood borne upon the head.

Perhaps there is no one point in which Christianity has a more direct influence upon the state of the community than in respect to the character and standing of the female. To a Hindu the birth of a daughter is an occasion of sorrow. At the early age of twelve or thirteen years, she is required to leave the parental roof, and to become the wife of a man whom she has had no voice in choosing as her companion. Her duties to him are thus prescribed in the Shasters: "When in the presence of her husband, a woman must keep her eyes upon her master, and be ready to receive his commands. When he speaks, she must be quiet, and listen to nothing beside. When he calls, she must leave every thing else, and attend upon him alone. A woman has no other god on earth than her husband. The most excellent of all good works she can perform is, to gratify him with the strictest obedience. This should be her only devotion. Though he be aged, infirm, dissipated, a drunkard, or a debauchee, she must still regard him as her god. She must serve him with all her might, obeying him in all things, spying no defects in his character, and giving him no cause for disquiet. If he laughs, she must also laugh; if he weeps, she must also weep; if he sings, she must be in an ecstasy. She must never eat until her husband is satisfied. If he abstains, she must also fast; and she must abstain from whatever food her husband dislikes."

On the next page you will see the interior of a Hindu dwelling at meal time. The husband, according to custom, is seated upon a mat, eating his boiled rice with his fingers, while his wife is standing by him ready to obey his commands. She is never permitted to eat with her husband, but waits upon him in the capacity of a servant, and afterwards partakes of the fragments in retirement.

Schools are not uncommon in India, but there are none for the instruction of the female. Her mind is entirely uncultivated, and she has no fixed principles to regulate her conduct. She is therefore an easy prey to vice, and the devoted slave of superstition. When her husband dies, she must either burn herself upon his funeral pile, or, if she determines to live, it must be a life of

reproach and servitude. She may never marry again, however young she may be. She must cast off all her ornaments, shave her head, and either become a servant in the house of her hus-

band's friends, or adopt a mode of life which will bring disgrace not only upon herself, but upon the whole family. Hence it is, that death upon the funeral pile is so often preferred to surviving widowhood. This cruel custom was, in 1827, prohibited by the East India Company in their own dominions; but in some of the independent provinces the practice is still continued.

A large proportion of the persons who undertake long and hazardous pilgrimages, and who subject themselves to painful modes of self-torture, are females. "At a certain time," says a missionary of my acquaintance, "as I was walking in a retired village, my attention was arrested by seeing two objects, at some distance before me, rolling in the mud. As I approached the spot, I found two females, almost exhausted by fatigue. I learnt that they had vowed to their goddess to roll, in this manner, from one temple to another. They had spent nearly the whole day, and had not accomplished one half their journey. But no arguments, no remonstrances, on my part, could induce them to relinquish their undertaking; for they feared that, unless they performed their vow, the goddess would be angry with them. On leaving these deluded votaries of superstition," continued he, "with

my feelings aroused almost to indignation, I expostulated with a learned Brahmin who stood not far distant, and pointed to the miserable objects I had just left. 'O,' said he, 'this is worship exactly suited to the capacity of females. Let them alone They are sincere: of course their worship will be accepted.'"

I might relate many other facts to show the wretched condition of women in pagan lands, but these must suffice. The respected ladies of this audience will permit me to say, in conclusion, every thing in life, in death, and eternity, that can inspire you with the love of existence, you derive from the gospel. To you, then, in a special manner, is the gospel "glad tidings of great joy."

A KYAN WOMAN.

From a portrait taken by M. Symes, Esq., for the East India Company. Kyan is the name of a people inhabiting the mountains between Arracan and Ava. All the women of that tribe, when they arrive at a certain age, have the face tattooed. For a description of the process of tattooing, see page 118.

A

LECTURE

ON THE

CONDITION OF WOMEN

IN

PAGAN AND MOHAMMEDAN COUNTRIES.

BY CALEB WRIGHT.

THE AUTHOR HAS TRAVELLED MORE THAN FORTY THOUSAND MILES, FOR THE EXPRESS PURPOSE OF COLLECTING INFORMATION RESPECTING THE VARIOUS RACES OF PEOPLE WHOSE PECULIAR MANNERS, HABITS, AND SUPERSTITIONS HE DESCRIBES.

BOSTON:

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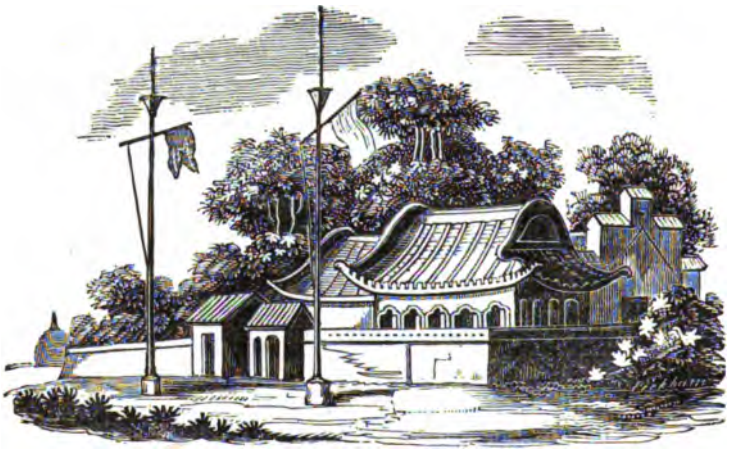


A Chinese House.

A Hindu School.

"While through the Eastern world schools are maintained for the instruction of boys, and they are sufficiently taught to qualify them for the common business of life, girls are left to utter ignorance of letters, and systematically refused all intellectual culture, as useless to themselves and injurious to society." — (See p. 96.)

LECTURE.

WOMAN, by Heaven's appointment, is man's help-meet. For this was she created, and for this furnished with her peculiar endowments. "It is not good that man should be alone." Solitude is ill adapted to the development either of his physical energies, or of his intellectual and moral powers. His nature demands companionship; without it, the world is a blank. and human existence a cheerless night.

Woman, in her original state, (to use the language of another,) "was all that is lovely in form, all that is graceful in manner, all that is exalted in mind, all that is pure in thought, all that is delicate in sentiment, all that is enchanting in conversation." She was God's most finished workmanship. Has she lost her original purity and loveliness? But man has fallen too; and relatively they are to each other still what they were before they took and ate of the forbidden fruit. It is now, as ever, Heaven's will that woman receive all "due benevolence" from man,—that he regard her as his equal, and entitled to his warmest love: that he throw his arm around her for protection, and combine with the gentlest care the most respectful deference to her honor and her happiness. "A man shall leave his father and his mother and cleave unto his wife, and they shall be one flesh." "Husbands, love your wives," is God's command and nature's law, for they are bone of each other's bone and flesh of each other's flesh. SUCH IS THE GENIUS OF CHRISTIANITY. And the result of obedience to this eternal law of God and nature, is the lofty elevation of the female character, the thorough cultivation of her mind, the rich endowment of her heart, and the augmented strength of all her capabilities of usefulness and enjoyment; while the result of disobedience is fraught with all that is degrading to intellect, vitiating to social principle, corrupting to moral habits, and hostile to every upward movement of the immortal powers.

And what is the spirit of heathenism, and of false religion in its varied forms, let the impartial pen of history tell. Times,

ancient and modern,—witnesses, Pagan, Mahometan, and Christian, may be indiscriminately cited on this point. Their testimony is one,—truthful, melancholy, and decisive.

A daughter is born. 'T is a grievous calamity. The Hindu father becomes dejected, and his neighbors gather around him to mingle their grief with his. The Chinese parent thus afflicted denominates the little innocent a *woo*, a hated thing. Even the Moorish mother repines, and though she had rejoiced greatly at the birth of her son, and blackened her face forty days in token of her joy, yet when a daughter comes into the world, she ill conceals her mortification, by blackening half her face, for half the period only.

It was not long since, that the lady of a missionary in the East, having become the mother of a lovely daughter, a native friend of the husband called on him the following day with a countenance unusually sad. The missionary kindly inquired the cause of his sadness. His friend, with most lugubrious face, replied, "I have heard that your new-born infant is a daughter, and I have come to condole with you, on your hard fate." So little valued is the life of female infants, within the domains of Paganism, that great numbers are put to death, solely to avoid the trouble and expense of feeding and clothing them.

The singular custom formerly prevailed in the northern part of Hindustan, whenever a female child was born, of carrying her to the market-place, and there, holding up the child in one hand, and a knife in the other, proclaiming, that if any person wanted to rear her for a wife, they might then take her; if none appeared to accept of her, she was immediately destroyed. The consequence of this course, was, that the men of the tribe became much more numerous than the women; and hence arose the custom of appropriating several husbands to one wife,—a custom that still prevails in some of the southern as well as the northern tribes of Hindustan. Among the Rajpoot tribes in the north-west part of that country nearly all the female children are put to death immediately after birth; consequently the men are obliged to procure their wives from other tribes. And among some, at least, of the Indian tribes of our own land, the case is no better. Said a Chippewa Indian, (in a recent address before a missionary society in London,)—"When a boy is born in the tribe it is a day of rejoicing, because it is considered that he will make a fine warrior; but when a female is born, it is a time of sorrow, and it is said, 'a good-for-nothing girl is born.' The poor mother, knowing that the news is not good, kisses the poor child, and

A Hindu Woman of the Brahmin caste. She has prepared a dinner of rice, placed it upon a Plantain leaf, and is carrying it to her husband.

says, 'Father does not love you, but I do;' and then, taking the infant by the legs, dashes out its brains, exclaiming, 'Would to God, my mother had done so with me when I was born,—I should not then have been such a slave.' On one occasion the helpless babe was rescued from its mother, by her sisters, who said, 'It is better that your child should be a slave than to kill it in this way.' That babe is now grown up; when fourteen years of age, she was converted, and has now become a Sabbath school teacher, and a useful member of society."

THE EDUCATION OF HEATHEN FEMALES IS ENTIRELY NEGLECTED. While, throughout the Eastern world, schools are maintained for the instruction of boys, and they are sufficiently taught to qualify them for the common business of life, girls are left to utter ignorance of letters, and systematically refused all intellectual culture, as useless to themselves and injurious to society. To a European gentleman, (who endeavored to persuade the natives of a Hindu village that the education of their females in reading, writing, and arithmetic, would be of advantage to their husbands, and would render them their equals and companions, as well as helpers,) it was replied,—"All this, Sahib, may be very true with your people, but it will never do for us. It would be impossible for Hindus to keep their wives in subjection, if they were educated." Shrewd reasoning this!—based on the preposterous assumption, that man is created to be a master, and woman a slave. In vain were these villagers assured that women of the most refined education and extensive knowledge are the most affectionate and faithful wives in the world, because governed by reason, judgment, and common sense, they regard the interest of their husbands as their own, and yield a systematic and cheerful obedience in those things in which the husband's will ought to have the preference, while, at the same time, he might enjoy the advantages of her better judgment in matters which pertain to her own sphere. Their only reply to such arguments is, "Our women are not like yours,—if educated they would be refractory, and would no longer carry burdens, and collect cow's ordure for fuel." On grounds like these, is the whole mass of female mind throughout Hindustan, China, Burmah, Persia, Turkey, &c., doomed to perpetual darkness and gloom, instead of sharing the light of science, and rejoicing in the radiance of the sun of righteousness.

THEY ARE NOT AT THEIR OWN DISPOSAL IN MARRIAGE. Of all the relationships of life, this is the basis. Of all affinities, it is the closest and most tender. Of earthly bliss, it is the purest foun-

A HINDU WOMAN.

"Our women are not like yours — if educated they would be refractory, and would no longer carry burdens."—Page 96.

tain,—the brightest crown,—the loveliest image of heaven's blest communion.

> "True bliss (if man may reach it) is composed
> Of hearts in union mutually disclosed;
> And farewell else, all hope of pure delight."

"In marriage," (says Jeremy Taylor,) "kindness is spread abroad, and love is united, and made firm as a centre; it is the nursery of heaven,—it fills up the number of the elect. It is the mother of the world, and preserves the kingdoms, and fills the cities, and the churches, and heaven itself. Like the useful bee, it builds a house, and gathers sweetness from every flower, and labors, and unites into societies and republics, and sends out colonies, and feeds the world with delicacies, and keeps order, and promotes the interest of mankind, and is that state of good things, to which God has designed the present constitution of the world."

But all this supposes confidence and esteem, growing out of acquaintance between the parties,—affection, inspiring a mutual desire to please, and the immerging of individual interests in the common stock of domestic enjoyments. And of this, Paganism knows nothing. It holds females as articles of merchandise, to be disposed of to those who will pay for them the highest price. Girls of six or eight years are bought and sold by their fathers as calves of the stall, to be taken, at twelve or fourteen, (whether willing or unwilling,) from the home of their childhood, and put into the hands of the man for whom they were purchased.

In Hindustan, females, who remain unmarried till they are fifteen or sixteen years of age, (however correct in their conduct,) are regarded as infamous, and (like widows) are never sought for in marriage; and widowers (even if sixty or seventy years old) invariably marry girls of ten or twelve. Among the poorer classes in China, when a man dies, his relatives (to regain the money originally paid for his bride) are allowed to sell his widow to become the wife of another man. The arrangement is made without her knowledge, and (regardless of her wishes) she is forced into a palenkeen, and carried to the house of her purchaser. The price of a bride varies much in different countries. In some parts of Africa ten or fifteen bullocks are paid as an equivalent, while a handsome red-haired Circassian or Georgian girl cannot be bought for less than six or seven thousand piasters. In the kingdom of Dahomey, all unmarried women are held as the property of the king. Once a year they assemble at the

A Hindu Woman of Bengal, of high rank, in full Dress.

palace, when he selects the handsomest for himself, and sells the remainder to his subjects. The purchaser is allowed no choice, but receives the wife selected for him by the king. But the whole story of man's regard for woman in unevangelized lands, is told in the simple language of the Modean of Siberia, who, at the close of the marriage ceremony, places the bride on a mat, and conveys her to the bridegroom, saying, "There, wolf, take thy lamb."

It is not in all heathen countries, however, that wives are obtained by money or its equivalent. In some tribes more romantic customs prevail. The New Hollander fixes his eye upon some female of a tribe at enmity with his own. He steals upon her at some moment when no protector is near, and deals out blows with his club, upon her head, neck, back, indeed every part of her body, till she becomes insensible; and then drags her by one of her arms, (the blood streaming from her wounds,) over rocks, hills, stones and logs, with all the violence and ferocity of a savage, till he reaches his tribe. The scene that follows, admits not of description. Suffice it to say, the poor violated woman becomes the wife of her ravisher,—is admitted to his tribe,—and (notwithstanding the singularity of the courtship) is contented with her lot, and rarely leaves her husband and her home.

That genuine love may exist, even among these rude barbarians, and sometimes be exhibited in the purest forms, admits not of doubt. Mr. Barrington (who had long resided in Parametta) mentions an instance that fell under his own observation, pleasantly illustrating this fact. "A brother of twenty-three, and two sisters of twenty and fourteen respectively, dwelt together affectionately in a cave near the city. On returning one day from hunting the kangaroo, just as the darkness of night mantled the heavens, and while the forked lightning played vividly around him, at the mouth of the cave, his eye caught the form of his younger sister, bleeding on the ground. Troubled before at the warring of the elements, his soul was now in agony. He endeavored to raise her up, but she was senseless. At length, however, his efforts were successful, and, with returning animation, she exclaimed, 'Dear brother! our sister is torn from us,—a wretch came to the cave, beat her cruelly with his club, and caught up one arm to drag her away,—I laid hold of the other to prevent him, but the moment he saw it, with a single blow, he knocked me to the ground, where you have now found me.' The night was passed in the anguish of grief and amid harrow-

A Mohammedan Woman of Bengal, of high rank, in full Dress

ing purposes of revenge. Morning came. Together they sought the tribe of the offender. A little before reaching it, they met the sister of the very man who had committed the outrage, gathering sticks for a fire. A fine opportunity was thus presented for revenge. The brother (bidding his sister to hide herself) flew upon the young woman, with club in hand, and with all the ferocity of a savage in his heart. The victim trembled; but knowing his power, she stood firmly, and looked him in the eye, when, (like the lion of the forest, meeting the eye of intelligent man,) he paused,—he gazed,—enchantment was on him: she saw it,—dropped on her knees and implored his compassion. Revenge softened into love; throwing down his club, he clasped her in his arms, and vowed eternal constancy. This nobleness won her heart. He called his sister, who thirsted still for the stranger's blood, and said to her, 'She is now my wife.'"

> "Nor force nor interest joined unwilling hands,
> But love consenting tied the blissful bands."

All three now love each other tenderly, and (under the instruction of a Christian friend) read the oracles of God, and cherish the spirit that breathes from the bosom of Jesus.

POLYGAMY PREVENTS THE ENJOYMENT OF THE HUSBAND'S AFFECTION. Conjugal love may be disturbed,—or it may be diminished,—or it may be maddened into phrensy,—or it may be annihilated,—but it cannot be divided. Abraham may become the husband of Hagar, but his heart is with Sarah. Jacob may be the protector of Leah, but he loves Rachel. Elkanah may deal kindly with Peninnah, but his affections are with Hannah. Good men these, and faithful to their marriage-vows, though borne away into the transgression of the original law of Heaven, by the strong current of the popular sentiment of the age in which they lived. Then, though Heaven interfered not to prevent the practice, it never sanctioned it by law; and if it were not condemned by statutes and penalties, it was powerfully rebuked by its effects and consequences. Never did it fail, in the most auspicious circumstances for its indulgence, to produce domestic discord and wretchedness. Jealousy, bitterness, and strife, are its invariable attendants, even when associated with faith as strong as that of the patriarchs, and piety as ardent as that of the sweet singer of Israel. Its inconsistency with the spirit of the gospel has expelled the practice from every Christian land; and its incongruity with reason and expediency, has stamped it with infamy. But it still prevails among the higher classes, in nearly every part of the unevangelized world.

A Parsee Woman of Bombay, of high rank, in full Dress.

Besides four queens, the king of Birmah has thirty wives, and five hundred other women at his disposal. The emperor of Turkey swells his harem, usually, with more than a thousand wives,—the sultan Achmet I. is said to have had three thousand. The king of Ashantee has three thousand three hundred and thirty-three,—a mystical number, on the integrity of which the prosperity of his kingdom is supposed to depend. And the king of Yarriba boasted to Capt. Clapperton, that his wives, linked hand in hand, would reach entirely across his kingdom.

Not only kings, but nobles, and men of wealth and station, and indeed men of all classes, who have the ability to sustain a plurality of wives, are eager to possess them,—not as objects of affection, but as honorable appendages to their establishments, or as ministering to their pride and sensuality. Love is not known

> ——— "where pleasure is adored,
> That ruling goddess, with a zoneless waist
> And wandering eyes, still leaning on the arm
> Of novelty."

but its place is supplied by envy, and rancor, and hate, bursting forth, often, in words of wrath and deeds of cruelty, and the wanton murder of the innocent. Says Lady Montague, during her residence in Constantinople, "The body of a young woman of surpassing beauty was found one morning near my house. She had received two wounds, one in her side, and the other in her breast, and was not quite cold. Many came to admire her beauty; but no one could tell who she was,—no woman's face being known out of her family. She was buried privately, and little inquiry made for the wretch who had imbrued his hands in her blood." The Pacha of Acre, in Palestine, a few years since, put to death seven of his wives, at one time, with his own hands. And even where cruelties like these are not perpetrated, the wife is kept a prisoner in the house of her lord, and her face is never seen beyond it. She is thus entirely in the irresponsible power of her husband, nor is one earthly ear but his, open to the tale of her wrongs, how terrible soever they may be. That she endures such wrongs, is no more to be questioned than the existence of caprice in man's proud heart, or of contempt for the whole sex, which he regards as infinitely inferior to his own.

The Pagan or Mahometan wife is liable to divorce, and consequent poverty and shame, at any moment when her husband wills it. For one cause, and only one, Christianity permits the disruption of the conjugal tie. And it is this inviolability of the

Brousa, formerly the Capital of Turkey.

relation that operates so kindly in the restraint of unseemly passions, and in perpetuating

> "Domestic happiness, the only bliss
> Of Paradise that has survived the fall."

But false religions allow to man unbounded license. Might and right, in their vocabulary, are but synonymous terms; and woman (dishonored without her own fault) is, at her husband's pleasure, turned an outcast from her home. Let the Arab's wife be taken sick, and forthwith she is returned to her parents with the message, "I paid for a healthy woman, and cannot afford the support of a sickly one." Let the Siberian become dissatisfied with his wife, for any cause, and he has but to tear her cap from her head, and the marriage contract is dissolved. Let the husband of Sumatra but break a bamboo, in the presence of his wife and their relatives, and the divorce is effected. Or, let the Greenlander leave his home in apparent anger, and not return for a few days; the wife understands his meaning, picks up her clothes, and returns to her friends. Or let the South Sea Islander but speak the word, and the relation is dissolved, though no dislike of the wife to the husband can produce a separation without his consent. But a divorce is ruin to the female,—it dooms her irrevocably to scorn and universal contempt, and (with scarcely less certainty) to a life of vice and infamy.

But the degradation of woman under the fell influence of false religions is not yet fully seen. She is her husband's slave, and with unquestioning servility, must yield to his behest, on penalty of torture, separation, or death. Nor is this a mere accident of her condition. The religion of her country decrees it,—the sacred books demand it. The Koran, and the Hindu Shasters, whose doctrines sway the mind, and determine the practice, of more than two hundred millions of the human family, make woman infinitely man's inferior,—the mere pander to his passions, —the abject drudge, owing him unconditional submission. Says the Shaster of the Hindu, — "The supreme duty of a wife, is, to obey the mandate of her husband. Let the wife who wishes to perform sacred ablution, wash the feet of her lord, and drink the water, for the husband is to the wife greater than Vishnoo. If a man goes on a journey his wife shall not divert herself by play, nor shall see any public show, nor shall laugh, nor shall dress herself in jewels and fine clothes, nor shall see dancing, nor hear music, nor shall sit at the window, nor shall ride out, nor shall behold anything choice and rare, but shall fasten well the house door, and remain private, and shall not eat any dainty food, and

Mosque at Salonica.

shall not blacken her eyes with powder, and shall not view her face in a mirror,—she shall never exercise herself in any such agreeable employment during the absence of her husband." Again, "A woman shall never go out of the house without the consent of her husband, and shall act according to the orders of her husband, and shall not eat until she has served him,"—though, "if it be physic, she may take it before he eat."

Not only in Hindustan, but in almost every unevangelized country, the wife is obliged to stand and wait upon her husband while he eats, and to be content with such food as is left after his wants are satisfied. In the Society Islands, while Paganism reigned, women were not only thus compelled to wait upon their husband's table, but were not allowed, on pain of death, to eat at all of those kinds of food which were most highly esteemed. The cocoa-nut, the plantain, the fowl, the turtle, the swine, the shark, and various kinds of fish, were tabued to them. Nor were they allowed to eat in the same house with the men, nor to cook their food at the same fire, nor to put it into the same vessels. The transgression of these rules involved immediate drowning or strangulation. "The females of Raratonga," (says the Rev. Mr. Williams,) "were denied those kinds of food reserved for the men and the gods,—compelled to eat their scanty meals by themselves, and forbidden to dwell under the same roof with their tyrannical masters."

Till Riho Riho became ruler of the Sandwich Islands, similar customs prevailed there. About the time when he caused the idols to be destroyed, a dinner party was made, to which the principal chiefs and other persons of distinction were invited. When the company were seated around the table spread in an open bower, the king took his seat between two of his queens,—presented them with some of the forbidden food, and ate from the same dish with them. The whole company were astonished at such an innovation on ancient usages; so great, indeed, was the excitement produced, that it threatened a revolution in the government. The authority of the monarch, however, sustained by the incipient influences of Christianity, prevailed.

In 1787, the emperor of China issued the following decree: "All persons of the female sex, of whatever quality or condition, are forbidden, upon any pretext whatever, to enter a temple or quit their houses, except in cases of absolute necessity. Fathers, husbands, brothers, sons or relatives, are commanded to keep them at home, upon pain of being themselves severely punished. After this, any woman who shall enter a temple shall be

Church at Lahina, Sandwich Islands.

apprehended and imprisoned, till some one shall appear to claim her, and to undergo the punishment due to his negligence,"— thus cutting off at a stroke the whole female population of the empire from all the rites of religion, and all the pleasures of social intercourse.

In some parts of Siberia the marriage ceremony is no sooner performed, than the wife pulls off her husband's boots, in token of submission. In other parts of the same country, the morning after a wedding, a man representing the father of the bride, delivers to the husband a whip, which, whenever the wife offends, is to be used freely. In the interior of Java the bride washes the bridegroom's feet in token of subjection. In Bambouk, Africa, she takes off her sandals, kneels before the bridegroom, pours water upon his feet, and wipes them with her mantle. In Madagascar, when a husband returns from war, his wife gives him the customary salutation of passing her tongue over his feet most respectfully. In New Holland, the slightest offence given to the husband brings down the club upon the wife, which never fails to draw forth a stream of blood and often fractures the skull. Among the Mandingoes, the terrible personage called Mumbo Jumbo, is called forth to frighten the refractory wife into submission. This demon form, assumed either by the husband himself or some one instructed by him, gives notice of his approach from the neighboring woods, near sunset, by the most frightful yells. At dark the men go out to meet him. He has a rod in his hand, a hideous mask on his head, and is fantastically decorated with the bark of trees. He is conducted to the village, where all the married women are assembled. The ceremonies commence. Songs and dances continue till a late hour. Mumbo Jumbo himself sings a song peculiar to the occasion. Then the women are required to arrange themselves in a circle. After a long pause and profound silence, Mumbo points out those that have been disobedient to their husbands, or otherwise have behaved improperly, and they are immediately seized, stripped, tied to a post, and severely beaten with Mumbo's rod, amid the shouts and deridings of the whole assembly.

And to such humiliation of woman, are boys, in some instances at least, systematically trained. The Hottentot mother, who has brought up her boy with tenderness till he has reached the period when custom demands his initiation by certain ceremonies into the society of men, is the first to feel the weight of his arm on his return home from the scene of his transition; for, to show that he is now a man and has the spirit of a man, he

Interior of a Chinese Temple.

beats her soundly; nor does censure follow the barbarous act, but he is applauded for his contempt of the society and authority of woman. For aught I know, the mother herself applauds it,—but how deep her degradation, when prepared to submit to insult like this on maternal dignity and honor! How unlike is the spirit of Christianity, prompting the son, in the perfection of his understanding, in the plenitude of his power, and amid the self-gratulations of his independence, to submit to the mild reason of his mother,—to acknowledge her unassuming sway, and admit that though independent of all things else, he cannot do without the smiles of maternal approbation, the admonitions of maternal solicitude, and the reproofs of maternal tenderness and integrity.

Woman, in unevangelized lands, is forced to perform the most perilous and menial services of the state and the family. The three thousand wives of the king of Dahomey are enrolled in the army, formed into regiments, armed with all the accoutrements of war, and a part of them serve as the king's body-guard. These numerous queens, and the other thousands belonging to the kings of Ashantee and Yarriba, are but servants, maintained for ostentation,—to display the wealth and power of their royal masters; and when not engaged in fighting the battles or guarding the persons of their lords, they are doomed to labor in the fields and submit to all the drudgery that pertains to the wife of the meanest subject of the realm. Nor is this all. At the death of an African king, his wives are slaughtered by scores and by hundreds, from an idea that their attendance will be needed in another world.

Go with me to Van Dieman's Land, and see the weaker sex charged with the whole burden of supporting their families,—husbands, children and all. Is the rough soil to be cultivated? In their hands are the implements of labor. Is the sea to be searched for the sea-carp or the lobster? They are found plunging from the projecting rocks into the briny flood, remaining on the rocky bottom, beneath the waves, twice as long (says a naval officer) as the most expert of our divers,—filling their baskets,—returning ashore,—drying themselves a few minutes by the fire, and warming their chilled limbs, and then resuming their perilous toils, while their husbands, through the whole, are seated comfortably around the fire, feasting on the choicest of the fish, and the most delicate of the broiled fern-roots.

Nor need I carry you to the other side of the globe, to witness the unseemly toils and bitter sufferings of benighted woman. Our own continent supplies us practical illustrations without end.

Ojibwa Women building a Hut. *The only Materials used are Poles and Birch-bark.*

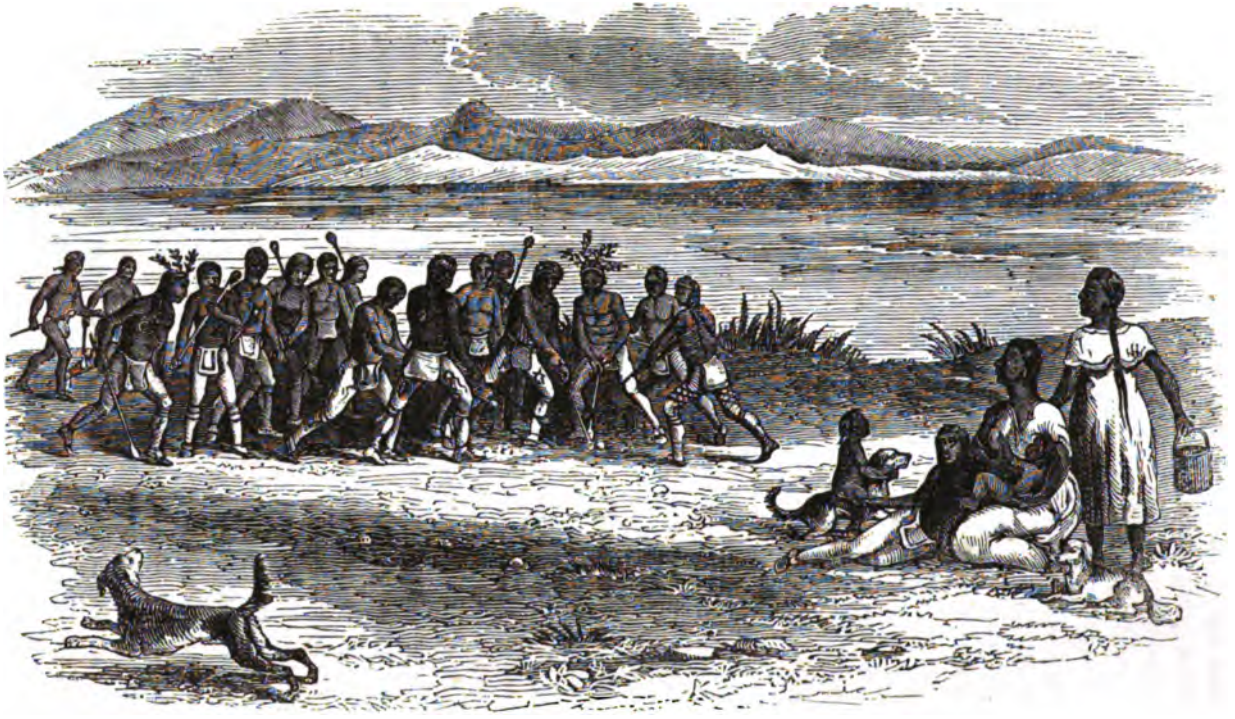
Let a fact or two suffice. Father Joseph (a missionary on the banks of the Oronoco) ventured to reprove an Indian female, for destroying her infant daughter. She replied, "O that my mother had thus prevented the manifold sufferings I have endured! Consider, father, our deplorable condition. Our husbands go out to hunt; we are dragged along with one infant at the breast and another in a basket. Though tired with long walking, we are not allowed to sleep when we return, but must labor the whole night in grinding maize to make chica for them They get drunk and beat us; they drag us by the hair of the head and tread us under foot. And after such a slavery of twenty years, what have we to comfort us? A young wife is brought home and permitted to abuse us and our children. What kindness can we show our daughters, equal to putting them to death? Would to God my mother had put me under ground the moment I was born!"

One case more only for the sake of contrast. "Soon after my acquaintance with these Indians," (says a missionary to the Choctaws,) "I one day saw a chief travelling on horseback, quite at his ease, followed by his poor wife, who was not only on foot, but carried his infant child, his rifle, and a quantity of provisions in a large basket at her back, supported by a strap drawn across her forehead. At a subsequent season, I met the same family again on their travels; the chief was now on foot, laden with his own arms, and he had kindly placed his wife on the saddle. The child, too, now much larger than before, was sweetly sleeping in the arms of its father, who himself seemed cheerful and happy amid the fatigues of the way." The language of the poet to his wife he practically adopted as his own:

> "On all her days let health and peace attend,
> May she ne'er want nor lose a friend;
> May some new pleasure every hour employ,
> But let her husband be her highest joy."

And what think you was the cause of this wonderful transformation? THE CHOCTAW CHIEF HAD BECOME A FOLLOWER OF CHRIST.

But the widowhood of the Pagan wife and mother is, if possible, more wretched than her married life. As if Satan could not bear that the daughters of the first victim of his seduction should find peace in any condition, he first torments them as daughters in the house of their fathers, then as wives in the dwellings of their husbands, and then as widows, cast out from



American Indians playing ball.

every charity of human life. Under the dark covert of Pagan superstition and Mahometan delusion, unopposed by the sword of the Spirit, he accomplishes with ease his fiendish purposes, and adds the wormwood and gall of universal malice and contempt to all the bitterness of the dregs that had filled her cup of woe, from the cradle to the death of her husband. Formerly, the Caffre widow, on the decease of her husband, whatever was the season of the year, and whatever her condition, was compelled to fly to the forest, and houseless, hungry, and alone, mourn her loss day after day. During her absence her dwelling was plundered by her relatives of everything valuable, set on fire, and consumed, and the only dowry allotted her from her husband's property was a new garment, made from the hide of one of his oxen. On returning from the wildernesss, she built a new hut with her own hands, and subsisted on the avails of her own labor. Missionary enterprise has succeeded in abolishing this cruel custom, and Mr. Shaw, the missionary who was instrumental in accomplishing it, received the name of Umkinets Umfazie, (the woman's shield,) by which he is now generally known in Caffraria. In Greenland, when the husband dies, the widow, if unprotected by friends, is usually robbed of a considerable portion of her property by those who come to sympathize with her by an affected condolence, and can obtain no redress. If aged and infirm, she is not unfrequently buried alive by her own children.

As the legitimate consequences of their servile and wretched condition, females of every unevangelized land are devoid of those sentiments of delicacy, and that refined taste and acute discrimination between the lovely and the disgusting in manners and customs, which distinguish the sex in lands enlightened by the gospel. Before Christianity commenced its reign in the Society Islands, wrestling was a favorite amusement of females, and one in which those of the highest rank engaged, not only with each other, but also with the men, in the presence of thousands of spectators of both sexes. Immediately after marriage, every female provided herself with an instrument set with rows of shark's teeth, with which, on the death of any of the family, she fearfully cut and lacerated herself, beating the head, temples, cheeks, and breast, till blood flowed profusely, while she uttered the most deafening and agonizing cries. Filthy in their persons, indecent in their apparel, fantastic in their ornaments, and familiar beyond endurance in their approaches to the other sex, their character stands forth an enduring but sad monument of that

Sacrifice of a Dog, and presentation of Offerings at an Indian Funeral.

intellectual and moral degradation which Paganism and Mahometanism have spread far and wide. Here their bodies are rubbed with bear's grease, and there with fish oil, or some offensive compound of vegetable and animal matter. The sheep-skin, or the bullock's hide,—the tattered handkerchief, or the entrails of slain beasts, serve for partial protection from the frosts of winter, or the burning summer's sun; and scarcely answering the purpose of fig-leaves in the fallen first pair, are not unfrequently laid aside as needless incumbrances, while the whole person is exposed to the observation of every passer-by. In Arabia, they stain their fingers and toes red; their eye-brows black, and their lips blue. In Persia, they paint a black streak around the eyes, color their eye-brows and hair, and stain the face and neck with figures of beasts, birds, flowers, &c. The Hottentot women paint the entire body in compartments of red and black. Hindu females, when they wish to appear particularly lovely, paint the body with saffron and tumeric mixed with grease. In nearly all the islands of the Pacific and Indian oceans, and in many other parts of the world, like the men, they tattoo the body, with an instrument resembling somewhat a fine-toothed comb, whose sharp teeth, dipped into a solution of indigo or soot, are thrust into the flesh, introducing the coloring matter to remain forever, and imprinting a great variety of fanciful figures on the face, the lips, the tongue, the limbs, the whole body. The process is painful, though not more so than that of the female Greenlander, who first saturates threads with soot, and then inserts them beneath the skin, and draws them through. In New Holland, the women cut themselves with shells, and by keeping open the wounds a long time, form wales or seams on the flesh, which they deem highly ornamental. And another singular addition is made to their beauty by taking off the little finger of the left hand, at the second joint,—a process performed in infancy by tying a hair around it so tight as to produce mortification. In some parts of Hindustan, at the time of marriage, a like portion of the third and little finger is removed. A similar custom prevails among the Hottentots. Among some of the savage tribes of America, and also in Sumatra and Arracan, continual pressure is applied to the skull to flatten it, and add to the beauty of its form. In nearly all the South Sea Islands, custom requires an incision to be made in the lobe of each ear, into which rolls of leaves, or long pieces of wood or ivory are inserted, and from these, shells or fish teeth are suspended, to such an amount that their weight

A Hindu Woman of the Jogee sect.

draws down the ear nearly to the shoulder, and not unfrequently tears it asunder. The mother of Sumatra carefully flattens the nose of her daughter; and in New Guinea, the nose is perforated, and a large piece of wood or bone inserted, making it difficult to breathe. On the north-west coast of America, an incision more than two inches in length is made in the lower lip, and filled with a wooden plug. In Guiana, the lip is pierced with thorns, the heads being inside the mouth and the points resting on the chin. And in Java, Borneo, and Celebes, they file their teeth to a point, and color them black, considering it disgraceful to let them remain "white like the teeth of dogs."

In some countries corpulency is esteemed essential to beauty; and the wives of kings and chiefs are beloved in proportion to the sleek fatness and gross weight of their persons The Tunisian woman, of moderate pretensions to beauty, needs a slave under each arm to support her when she walks, and a perfect belle carries flesh enough to load down a camel. So anxious are mothers that their daughters should attain this unwieldy size, that they compel them to eat enormous quantities of fattening food and drink several bowls of camel's milk every day. Mungo Park describes a poor girl as crying for more than an hour, with a bowl at her lips, while her mother stood over her with a rod, and beat her cruelly, if she failed to swallow fast enough. And Capt. Clapperton found himself in not a little difficulty at Houssa, through the importunity of an Arab widow, whose wealth and rank, enforced by the charms of a huge person, black-dyed eyebrows, blue hair, red stained hands and feet, all adorned with necklaces, girdles and bracelets, seemed to fit her for the station of a queen, whither her aspirations tended, and to which, with Clapperton for a husband, she doubted not she might attain. But he happened not (O cruel!) to fancy "a walking tun-butt" for a wife, and preferred the loss of the honors of African royalty to the life-companionship of five hundred pounds of Arab flesh.

The beauty of a Chinese lady is in her feet, which in childhood are so compressed by bandages as effectually to prevent any further increase in size. The four smaller toes are turned under the foot, to the sole of which they firmly adhere. The poor girl not only endures much pain, but becomes a cripple for life. Another mark of beauty and distinction lies in the length to which the finger nails are allowed to grow,—a length that requires them to be shielded from accident by casings of bamboo. The ambitious beauties of Siam, not content with protecting carefully these ever-growing excrescences of nature, provide themselves with artificial nails four inches long.

HINDU JEWELRY—FROM SPECIMENS COLLECTED BY THE AUTHOR.

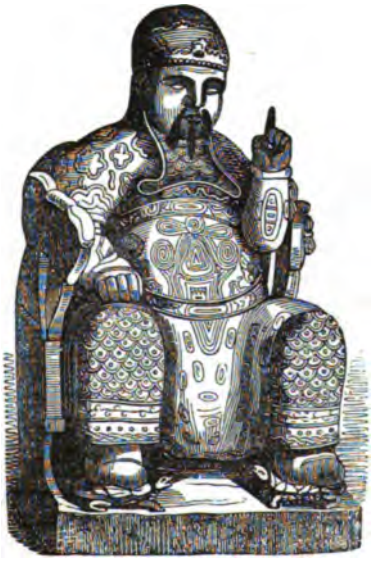
These engravings are of the size of the objects which they represent. No. 1 is an ornament for the ear; the lobe of the ear is pierced, and the aperture gradually stretched until it becomes sufficiently large to admit the ornament. No. 2 is a nose jewel. No. 3 is a bracelet; it is made of brass, and weighs one pound and nine ounces. Some of the women deck the arms with from ten to twenty brass rings, weighing more than half a pound each.

Allow that, agreeably to the proverb, "there is no disputing of tastes," and that no nation or individual is responsible to another for peculiar customs, will it be questioned that the wearing of cumbrous and unwieldy ornaments, and the disfiguring of the body, and forcing it into uncouth forms at the expense of so much suffering, are customs offensive to nature, and to nature's God,—the legitimate progeny of Paganism?—and so far as ever grafted upon the stock of Christianity, are they more incongruous with its simplicity and at variance with its spirit, than repulsive to reason and common sense? Foolish and unseemly customs are not confined to Pagan and Mahometan females, it is true,—they exist in more enlightened lands; but in these lands, they are one after another assailed, changed and banished by the mild genius of Christianity; while, in the darker portions of the earth, they enter into the very constitution of society, and know no change or modification, more than the elements of nature, or the immemorial rites of a bloody superstition. Deplorable, then, are the delusions under which the god of this world hath bound down the nations that yield unresistingly to his sway,—severe the bondage under which they wear out hated life, and melancholy the barbarous customs, which through conscience, fancy, or caprice, his tyrant arm imposes on successive generations.

To all this may be added their unbounded superstition. Their servile fear of the gods amounts to a terror which quenches the kindlings of natural affection, and drives them on to deeds of darkest inhumanity. Ignorant of the God of love, and conceiving of their divinities as capricious, malignant and revengeful, they are easily impelled to sacrifices at which nature shudders, and every sentiment of true piety stands aghast. Unenlightened by education, and enslaved by the spirit of idolatry, they become the victims of priestly craft, without resistance, and the dupes of their own vain imaginings, as if reason and conscience entered not at all into their moral constitution. The African female ventures not to commence a journey, nor to undertake important business of any kind, till well furnished with protective charms, consisting chiefly of bits of paper, which contain a written sentence, or fragment of a sentence, carefully deposited within a bag fastened to her person. The women of Houssa, seeing Major Denham using a pen, came to him in crowds, to obtain a scrawl that should serve as an amulet to restore their beauty, to preserve the affections of their lovers, or to destroy a rival. If a child be born in Madagascar, on a day reputed unlucky, its evil destiny must be averted, by the destruction of its life, under the hands

The Hindu Serpent God.

The Hindu Goddess Durga.



The Chinese Budh.

of its parents. The only alternative is, to leave it in a narrow path, over which a herd of cattle is furiously driven, while the parents stand looking on from a distance; and if it chance to escape unhurt, they run to embrace it, convinced that the malignant influence is removed. Sometimes the child is drowned in a vessel of water prepared for the purpose, or thrown into a pit, with its face downward, or suffocated by stuffing a cloth into its mouth; but the parents themselves are commonly the executioners, under the impression that there is no other way of saving the child from the misfortunes that await its future years. From time immemorial, Hindu mothers have thrown their infant children into the Ganges, to be devoured by alligators; not because they were destitute of maternal affection, but because a mother's love was overpowered by her fears of the wrath of some offended deity. The Hindu widow burns on the funeral pile of her husband. Thus she escapes the obloquy of widowhood, and becomes entitled, as she believes, to a residence with her husband and their relatives in heaven. Thanks to the gospel of Christ, this horrid superstition has relaxed its grasp on Indian mind; but, till within a few years, thousands of widows became annually its victims; and at the death of princes and other men of elevated rank, possessed of many wives, the dreadful sacrifice has been all that Abaddon himself could desire. Twelve widows in one instance, eighteen in another, thirty-seven in another, and on the death of Ajie, prince of Malwar, fifty-eight threw themselves on the funeral piles of their husbands and perished. As late as 1844 twenty-four women were burnt in Punjab. There can be no doubt that this dreadful sacrifice is sometimes voluntary on the part of the victim, but it is by no means universally so. Not only is all the earthly glory of the deed, and the happiness of a Pagan heaven promised on the one hand, and all the terrors of contempt and persecution through life, with everlasting infamy, arrayed on the other, but force is applied, with fiend-like perseverance, to compel the unhappy wife to mount the blazing altar of Moloch.

Follow me to the immolation of a Brahmin's widow in Northern Hindustan. The unfortunate woman, of her own accord, has ascended the burning pile. The torture of the fire is more than she can endure, and by a violent struggle she throws herself beyond the reach of the flames, and tottering to a river near by, is kindly plunged into it by some English gentlemen present, to assuage her torments. She retains her senses perfectly, shrinks with dread from another encounter with the flames, and refuses so to die. Her

A HINDU MOTHER LAMENTING THE DEATH OF HER CHILD.

"From time immemorial, mothers have thrown their children into the Ganges, to be devoured by alligators, not because they were destitute of maternal affection, but because a mother's love was overpowered by her fears of the wrath of some offended deity."—P. 124.

inhuman relatives then take her by the head and feet, and throw her upon the pile, and hold her there till driven away by the heat. They endeavor too, to stun her with blows,—but again she escapes and makes to the river. Her relatives then try to drown her, but one of the English gentlemen mentioned interferes, and she throws herself into his arms, begging him to save her. "I cannot describe to you," says one present at the scene, "the horror I felt at seeing her mangled condition; almost every inch of skin on her body had been burnt off,—her legs and thighs, her arms and back, were completely raw,—her breasts dreadfully torn, and the skin dangling from them in threads,—the skin and nails of her fingers had peeled wholly off, and were hanging to the back of her hands. In fact, I never saw and never read of so entire a picture of misery as this poor woman displayed. She still dreaded being again committed to the fire, and called to us to save her. Her friends at length desisted from their efforts. We sent her to the hospital. Every medical assistance was given, but, after lingering twenty hours, in excruciating pain, her spirit departed."

Such is the superstition of heathen lands. Its forms are various, but its spirit is everywhere the same. It leads its votaries to defile themselves with the mud of the streets, to measure the distance from their homes to their temples, by the length of their bodies prostrated every six feet of the way,—to swing in the air, suspended by hooks thrust through the muscles of the back, and to submit to a thousand other tortures, in honor of some cruel but imaginary deity. It teaches the brother to betray the sister,—the mother to imbrue her hands in the blood of her own offspring,—and the son to light the pile which consumes the mother that gave him life. It glories in deeds like these, as more pleasing to the gods than any alleviation of human woe that kindness can effect, and more intrinsically meritorious than all the moral virtues commended by the philosophy of Seneca, or the precepts of Christ.

But it is time to close. We have now cursorily glanced at the character of woman, as unaffected by the refining and elevating influences of Christianity. We have seen her trodden down as the mire of the streets by him whom Heaven created to be her protector and comforter. We have seen unevangelized man everywhere, like the fabled generation of warriors springing from the serpent's teeth armed for the work of destruction, directing his chief malignities against woman,—his best friend, his safest counsellor,—his most unfailing solace,—because her native timidity and weakness invite the violence and insult of a coward-

Women of Calcutta.

arm! We have seen her lost to self-respect, dead to instinctive affection, ignorant of the rights with which her Maker has invested her, unacquainted with her relations to eternity, indulgent to the wildest passions of depraved nature, and plunged far down the abyss of unnatural crime. We have marked her wanderings, listened to her complaints, and seen her scalding tears. And have we no sympathy in her sufferings?—no arm that will extend to her relief?—no voice that will call her to Calvary, and direct her eye to woman's friend and Saviour, and thence to a world of unmingled purity and love? Measures are in progress (thank God!) for restoring woman to her true dignity, and re-establishing her just relations to man as her husband, guardian, and unfailing friend. The same measures will restore the world to the dominion of Christ, and man, in all his tribes, to the sway of reason and revelation. Then shall it no more be said that

> ———" his ambition is to sink,
> To reach a depth profounder still, and still
> Profounder, in the fathomless abyss
> Of folly, plunging in pursuit of death;"

but he shall rise to "glory, honor, and immortality," and share it with the helper of his faith and love, the mother of his children, the softener of his dying pillow,—the kind angel that hovers over him as his soaring spirit takes its flight. Not far distant is the day, unless we quite mistake the "signs of the times," when, throughout all nations, woman shall resume the station Heaven first assigned her, and form again the loveliest ornament of humanity,—man's coadjutor in works of faith and labors of love, and childhood's most persuasive teacher of all that is virtuous, lovely, and of good report, in human disposition and action. Soon let that day of brightness dawn,—that glorious era be fully ushered in; for it shall prove the termination of earth's bitterest woes, and the consummation of Heaven's most earnest labors

DESCRIPTION

OF THE

HABITS AND SUPERSTITIONS

OF THE

THUGS;

A SECT WHO PROFESS TO BE DIVINELY AUTHORIZED TO

PLUNDER AND MURDER.

PUBLISHED BY CALEB WRIGHT.

Mendicant — Cave Temple of Elephanta.

HABITS AND SUPERSTITIONS

OF THE

THUGS.

While Europeans have generally travelled through India in comparative security, arising from the dread inspired by the power and dominion of the British government, the path of the native has been beset with perils by hordes of ferocious robbers, which every where abound, from the highest regions of the Himelaya Mountains to the southern extremity of Hindoostan. The most sanguinary class of these freebooters are the Thugs, or Phansigars. Their existence appears to have been entirely unknown to Europeans until about the year 1800. From January, 1826, to December, 1835, the number of Thugs committed by various magistrates amounted to 1562. Of these 328 were punished by death, 999 by transportation, 77 by imprisonment for life; from 21 security was required; 71 were sentenced to limited periods of imprisonment; making a total of 1450 convicted. Of the remainder, 21 were acquitted, 11 escaped, 31 died before sentence, and 49 were admitted evidence for the prosecution.

Gangs of Thugs sometimes consist of two or three hundred persons. In such instances, they commonly follow each other, in small parties of ten or twenty, upon roads parallel to each other, being prepared to concentrate on any point, when necessary. Different parties frequently act in concert, apprizing one another of the approach of travellers whose destruction promises a valuable booty. They assume the appearance of ordinary travellers: sometimes they pretend to be traders; and, if enriched by former spoliations, travel on horseback, with tents, and pass for wealthy merchants, or other persons of consequence. Sometimes they commence their route in more humble characters; but acquiring, in their rapacious progress, horses and bullocks, these at once furnish them with the means of transporting the remainder of their plunder, and of making pretensions to higher degrees of wealth and station.

Thugs are accustomed to wait at choultries, on the high roads, or near towns where travellers rest. They arrive at such places, and enter towns and villages, in straggling parties of three or four persons, appearing to meet by accident, and to have no previous acquaintance. On such occasions, some of the gang are employed as emissaries, to collect information, and, especially, to learn if any persons with property in their possession are about to undertake a journey. They are often accompanied by children of ten years of age and upwards; who, while they perform menial offices, are gradually initiated into the horrid practices of Thuggee, and contribute to prevent suspicion of their real character. Skilled in the arts of deception, they enter into conversation, and insinuate themselves by obsequious attentions into the confidence of travellers of all descriptions, to learn from them whence they came, whither and for what purpose they are journeying, and of what property they are possessed. When, after obtaining such information as they deem requisite, the Thugs determine to attack a traveller, they usually propose to him, under the specious plea of mutual safety, or for the sake of society, to travel together; or else they follow him at a little distance, and, when a fit opportunity offers for effecting their purpose, one of the gang suddenly throws a rope or sash round the neck of the unfortunate victim, while the rest contribute, in various ways, to aid the murderous work.

Intrepidity does not appear to be a characteristic of the Thugs; and, in truth, it is a quality not to be looked for in assassins by profession. A superiority in physical force is generally regarded as an indispensable preliminary to success. Two Thugs, at the least, are thought necessary for the murder of one man; and, more commonly, three are engaged. Some Thugs pride themselves upon being able to strangle a man single-handed; and this is esteemed a most honorable distinction. But the majority of them are, and ever have been, firm adherents of the maxim, that "discretion is the better part of valor."

Some variations have existed in the manner of perpetrating the murders; but the following seems to be the most general. While travelling along, one of the gang suddenly throws the rope or cloth round the neck of the devoted individual, and retains hold of one end, the other end being seized by an accomplice. The instrument of death, crossed behind the neck, is then drawn very tight, the two Thugs who hold it pressing the head of the victim forwards: a third villain, who is in readiness

behind the traveller, seizes him by the legs, and he is thus thrown on the ground. In this situation, there is little opportunity of resistance. The operation of the noose is aided by kicks inflicted in the manner most likely to produce vital injury, and the sufferer is thus quickly despatched.

The best precautions are taken to guard against discovery or surprise. Before the perpetration of the murder, some of the gang are sent in advance, and some left in the rear of the place, to keep watch, to prevent intrusion, and to give warning, if occasion requires, to those engaged in the act. Should any persons unexpectedly pass that way before the murdered body is buried, some artifice is practised to prevent discovery, such as covering the body with a cloth, while loud lamentations are made, professedly on account of the sickness or death of one of their comrades; or one of the watchers will fall down, apparently writhing with pain, in order to excite the pity of the intruding travellers, and to detain them from the scene of murder.

Such are the perseverance and caution of the Thugs, that, in the absence of a convenient opportunity, they have been known to travel in company with persons, whom they have devoted to destruction, for several days before they executed their intention. If circumstances favor them, they generally commit the murder in a jungle, or in an unfrequented part of the country, and near a sandy place or dry watercourse. Particular tracts are chosen, in every part of India, where they may exercise their horrid profession with the greatest convenience and security. The most favorite places are much-frequented roads, passing through extensive jungles, where the ground is soft for the grave, and where the local authorities take no notice of the bodies.

In these chosen spots, a hole, three or four feet in depth, usually forms the grave of the unhappy traveller, who is placed in it with his face downwards. The barbarous character of the Thugs is displayed in their treatment of the wretched remains of the murdered persons. Though death brings a termination of suffering, it does not put an end to the outrages of the murderers. Long and deep gashes are made in various parts of the bodies: sometimes the limbs are disjointed, and the figure distorted into unusual positions. These outrages arise from various motives. Their intention generally is to expedite the decomposition of the body, and to prevent its inflation, which, by causing fissures in the superincumbent sand, might attract jackals, and thus lead to the discovery of the corpse. Sometimes,

however, these deeds have been the result of disappointment, and the emanations of a petty and unmanly revenge. When the amount of plunder is less than had been expected, the villains have frequently vented their displeasure in wanton indignities on the unconscious remains of the dead.

If, when a murder is perpetrated, a convenient place for interring the body be not near, or if the Thugs be apprehensive of discovery, it is either tied in a sack, and carried to some spot where it is not likely to be found, or is put into a river or a well. In Oude, where the fields are almost all irrigated from wells, the bodies were generally thrown into them; and when the cultivators discovered these relics of crime, they hardly ever thought it worth while to ask how they came there — so accustomed were they to find them. If none of these expedients be advisable, a shallow hole is dug, in which the corpse is buried till a fit place for interring it can be discovered, when it is removed, and cut in the manner already mentioned. If compelled to perform the interment under circumstances which subject them to the risk of observation, the Thugs put up a screen on the wall for a tent, and bury the body within the enclosure; pretending, if inquiries are made, that their women are within the screen. If the traveller had a dog, it is killed, lest the affection of the animal should cause the discovery of the body of his murdered master.

Travellers resting in the same choultry with Thugs are sometimes destroyed in the night. On these occasions, a person is not always murdered when asleep; as, while he is in a recumbent posture, the stranglers find a difficulty in applying the cloth. The usual practice is, first to awaken him suddenly, with an alarm of a snake or a scorpion, and then to strangle him.

In attacking a traveller on horseback, one of the gang goes in front of the horse, and another has his station in the rear; a third, walking by the side of the traveller, keeps him engaged in conversation, till, finding that he is off his guard, he suddenly seizes the victim by the arm, and drags him to the ground, the horse at the same time being seized by the foremost villain: the miserable sufferer is then strangled in the usual manner.

Against Thugs, it must be obvious that arms, and the ordinary precautions taken against robbers, are unavailing. When a person is armed with a dagger, it is usual for one of the villains to secure his hands. It sometimes happens that entire parties of travellers, while journeying in imaginary security, are suddenly

cut off. Such are the cruelty and cupidity of these wretches, that, on the presumption of every traveller possessing concealed treasure, or some property, however trifling, the greatest apparent indigence does not always afford security.

The plunder is sometimes carried home, sometimes disposed of on the road. If the murdered person resided near the place of his assassination, the property is carried to a distance: if, as is more commonly the case, he is a stranger, they do not scruple to offer the fruits of their rapine in the immediate vicinity of their crime: the only precaution taken is, that the place of sale be in advance of that where the murder was committed, and not a village where the traveller had previously been seen.

A portion of the plunder is usually appropriated to defraying the expenses of religious ceremonies; and sometimes a part is also allotted for the benefit of widows and families of deceased members of the gang. The residue of the booty, being divided into several parts, is generally shared as follows — to the leader, two shares; to the men actually concerned in perpetrating the murder, and to the person who cut the dead body, each one share and a half; and to the remainder of the gang, each one share.

The operations of the Thugs are facilitated, and their designs cloaked, by a peculiar dialect: they have recourse, also, to a variety of signs. Drawing the back of the hand along the chin, from the throat outwards, implies that caution is requisite — that some stranger is approaching. Putting the open hand over the mouth, and drawing it gently down, implies that there is no longer cause for alarm. If an advanced party of Thugs overtake any traveller whom they design to destroy, but have need of more assistance, they make certain marks on the roads, by which those of the gang who follow understand that they are required to hasten forward. A party in advance also leaves certain marks, where a road branches off, as intimations to those who are behind. They draw their feet along the dust, in the direction they have taken; and if their friends are to follow quickly, they leave the dust piled up at the end of the line where the foot drops, or make a hole in the dust with the heel. If the road afford no dust, they leave two stones, placed one upon the other, in the line they have taken, and strew a few leaves of trees along the road. If their coadjutors are to make haste, they make a very long line of leaves. They have many other signs. for similar purposes.

Of the number of persons who fall victims to these lawless associations, it is obvious that no estimate can be made deserving of the slightest confidence. The number has, without doubt, varied greatly at different periods. There is reason to believe that, from the time of the conquest of Mysore, in 1799, to 1807 and 1808, the practice, in that part of India, reached its height, and that hundreds of persons were annually destroyed. In one of his reports, the magistrate of Chittoor observes, "I believe that some of the Phansigars have been concerned in above two hundred murders: nor will this estimate appear extravagant, if it be remembered that murder was their profession — frequently their only means of gaining a subsistence. Every man of fifty years of age has probably been actively engaged, during twenty-five years of his life, in murder; and, on the most moderate computation, it may be reckoned that he has made one excursion a year, and met, each time, with ten victims."

The profession of a Thug, like almost every thing in India, is hereditary, the fraternity, however, receiving occasional reënforcement from strangers; but these are admitted with great caution, and seldom after they have attained mature age.

The children of Thugs, during their more tender years, are kept in ignorance of the occupation of their fathers. After a time they are permitted to accompany them; but a veil is thrown over the darker scenes of the drama. To the novice, indeed, the expedition presents nothing but an aspect of pleasure. He is mounted on a pony; and being, by the laws of the Thugs, entitled to his share of the booty, he receives a portion of it, in presents suited to his years; the delight attending the acquisition being unalloyed by any consciousness of the means by which it has been obtained. The truth reveals itself by degrees. In a short time, the tyro becomes aware that his presents are the fruits of robbery. After a while, he has reason to suspect that robbery is aggravated by a fouler crime. At length, suspicion passes into certainty; and finally, the pupil is permitted to witness the exercise of the frightful handicraft which he is destined to pursue. The moral contamination is now complete; but it is long before the disciple is intrusted with the performance of the last atrocity. He passes through a long course of preparatory study — being first employed as a scout, next as a sexton, then as a holder of the limbs — before he is in any case thought worthy of being elevated to the dignity of a strangler.

A too precipitate disclosure of the frightful truth has some-

times produced fatal consequences. The following affecting story, related by a Thug who had become approver against his comrades, will illustrate this. "About twelve years ago," said the narrator, "my cousin, Aman Subahdar, took out with us my cousin Kurhora, brother of Omrow, (approver,) a lad of fourteen, for the first time. He was mounted on a pretty pony; and Hursooka, an adopted son of Aman, was appointed to take charge of the boy. We fell in with five Sieks; and when we set out before daylight in the morning, Hursooka, who had been already on three expeditions, was ordered to take the bridle, and keep the boy in the rear, out of sight and hearing. The boy became alarmed and impatient, got away from Hursooka, and galloped up at the instant the '*I hirnee*,' or signal for murder, was given. He heard the screams of the men, and saw them all strangled. He was seized with a trembling, and fell from his pony. He became immediately delirious, was dreadfully alarmed at the turbans of the murdered men, and, when any one touched or spoke to him, talked wildly about the murders, screamed as if in sleep, and trembled violently. We could not get him forward; and, after burying the bodies, Aman, myself, and a few others, sat by him while the gang went on. We were very fond of him, and tried all we could to tranquillize him, but he never recovered his senses, and before evening he died. I have seen many instances of feelings greatly shocked at the sight of the first murder, but never one so strong as this. Kurhora was a fine boy; and Hursooka took his death much to heart, and turned Byragee. He is now at some temple on the banks of the Nerbudda River."

The indiscriminate slaughter in which these miscreants might oe tempted to indulge is in some degree restrained by superstition. It is deemed unlucky to kill certain castes and classes; and their members are therefore usually respected. The most important and extended exception to the general rule of murder, is that of the female sex. Thugs, who have any real regard to the principles which they profess to respect, never take the lives of women. It cannot, however, be supposed that such a rule should be invariably observed by such persons as form the society of Thugs; and, in fact, it is constantly violated. "Among us," said one of the approvers interrogated by Captain Sleeman, "it is a rule never to kill a woman; but if a rich old woman is found, the gang sometimes get a man to strangle her, by giving him an extra share of the booty, and inducing him to take the

responsibility upon himself. We have sometimes killed other prohibited people, particularly those of low caste, whom we ought not even to have touched."

Among the privileged classes are washermen, poets, professors of dancing, blacksmiths, carpenters, musicians, oil-venders, sweepers, the maimed, the leprous, and those persons who carry the water of the Ganges into distant parts of India, to be used for religious purposes.

A Carrier of the Ganges Water.

The sacred cow, in the eyes of all Hindoos who have any pretensions to consistency, is a protection to its possessor; art is, however, sometimes resorted to, for the purpose of removing this impediment to business. A party of Thugs projected the murder of fourteen persons, including several women; but the design could not be carried into effect, because the victims had a cow with them. With some difficulty, they were persuaded to sell the cow to the Thugs; who, to induce the travellers to consent to the sale, pretended that they had vowed to make an offering of a cow at Shaphore, and were much in want of one. The cow was actually presented to a Brahman at Shaphore; and, the obstacle being removed, the whole of the unsuspecting travellers, including the females, were, two or three hours afterwards, strangled.

The movements of the followers of Thuggee are invariably governed by omens with which they believe their goddess favors them. However favorably an expedition may have been commenced, success is liable to be postponed by a multiplicity of ominous appearances. The dog enjoys the prerogative of putting a veto on their proceedings, by shaking his head. Sneezing entitles all the travellers within the gripe of the assassins to the

privilege of an escape, and no one dares to put them to death. The fighting of cats, in the fore part of the night, is a good omen; but, if heard towards morning, it betokens evil; the evil, however, may be averted by gargling the mouth with a little sour milk, and then spirting it out. The fighting of cats during the day is a very bad omen, and threatens great evil: if the cats fall down from a height while fighting, it is still worse. These ills are beyond the healing influence of sour milk, and call for nothing less than sacrifice. The noise of jackals fighting is also a very bad omen, and involves the necessity of leaving the part of the country in which the gang hears it. Almost every sound made by animals, birds, and insects, and also their various movements, are regarded as ominous either of good or of evil. "There are always signs around us," say the Thugs, "to guide us to rich booty and to warn us of danger; and if we are only wise enough to discern them, and religious enough to attend to them, we shall prosper in all our undertakings."

The following colloquy will illustrate the opinions, entertained by Thugs generally, as to the danger of associating with those who have not been regularly educated; the importance of attending to rules and omens; and the value and excellence of Thug learning.

Capt. Sleeman. You consider that a *borka* (a leader) is capable of forming a gang, in any part of India to which he may be obliged to flee?

Sahib and *Nasir.* Certainly; in any part that we have seen of it.

Capt. S. Do you know any instance of it?

Sahib and *Nasir.* A great number. Mudee Khan was from the old Sindouse stock, and was obliged to emigrate after the attack upon that place. Many years afterwards, we met him in the Deccan; and he had then a gang of fifty Thugs, of all castes and descriptions. We asked him who they were: he told us that they were weavers, braziers, bracelet-makers, and all kinds of ragamuffins, whom he had scraped together, about his new abode on the banks of the Heran and Nerbudda Rivers, in the districts of Jebulpore and Nursingpore. He was a Mussulman; and so were Lal Khan, and Kalee Khan, who formed gangs, after the Sindouse dispersion, along the same rivers.

Capt. S. But these men have all been punished; which does not indicate the protection of Davy.

Sahib and *Nasir.* It indicates the danger of scraping to-

gether such a set of fellows for Thuggee. They killed all people indiscriminately, women and men, of all castes and professions; and knew so little about omens, that they entered upon their expeditions, and killed people, in spite of such as the most ignorant ought to have known were prohibited. They were punished, in consequence, as we all knew that they would be; and we always used to think it dangerous to be associated with them, for even a few days. Ask many of them who are now here — Kureem Khan, Sheikh Kureem, Rumzanee, and others — whether this is not true; and whether they ever let go even a sweeper, if he appeared to have a rupee about him.

Capt. S. And you think that, if they had been well instructed in the signs and rules, and attended to them, they would have thrived?

Sahib and *Nasir.* Undoubtedly! so should we all.

Capt. S. You think that an inexperienced person could not any where form a gang of Thugs of himself?

Sahib and *Nasir.* Never. He could know nothing of our rules of augury, or proceedings; and how could he possibly succeed? Does not all our success depend upon knowing and observing omens and rules?

Capt. S. It would, therefore, never be very dangerous to release such a man.

Sahib and *Nasir.* Never; unless he could join men better instructed than himself. Every one must be convinced, that it is by knowing and attending to omens and rules that Thuggee has thrived.

The practice of Thuggee is not confined to adventurers upon land. The rivers of India are infested by bands of fresh-water pirates, of similar habits to those of the land Thugs, possessing the same feeling, and differing from them only in a few trifling particulars. There is still another class of Thugs, who murder such persons only as are travelling with their children. Their only object is to secure the children and sell them into slavery.

The dark and cheerless night of superstition, which has long clouded the moral vision of India, has given rise to institutions and practices so horrible, that, without the most convincing evidence, their existence could not be credited by minds trained under happier circumstances than those which prevail in the East. That giant power, which has held the human race in chains wherever the pure and unadulterated doctrines of revelation have not penetrated, has, in India, revelled in the wantonness of

prosperity; the foundations of delusion have been laid wide and deep; the poison of a false and brutalizing creed has been insinuated into every action of daily life; and the most obvious distinctions of right and wrong have been obliterated.

The fact of the existence of the cold-blooded miscreants who, in India, make a trade of assassination, is sufficiently horrible; but when it is added, that their occupation is sanctioned by the national religion, — that the Thugs regard themselves as engaged in the special service of one of the dark divinities of the Hindoo creed, — that the instruments of murder are in their eyes holy, — and that their faith in the protection of their goddess, and the perpetuity of their craft, is not to be shaken, — we must be struck by the reflection, that we have opened a page in the history of man, fearful and humiliating beyond the ordinary records of iniquity.

The genius of Paganism, which has deified every vice, and thus provided a justification of the indulgence of every evil propensity, has furnished the Thugs with a patron goddess worthy of those whom she is believed to protect. Of Kalee, the deity of destruction, they are the most devout and assiduous worshippers: in her name they practise their execrable art; and their victims are immolated in her honor. The Thugs believe that Kalee formerly coöperated more directly with them, by disposing of the bodies of those whom they murdered, but she required them not to look back to witness her operations. All was well, so long as they observed this rule; but the services of the goddess as a sextoness were lost through the carelessness or indiscreet curiosity of one of the association. Of the circumstances attendant on this mischance, there are different versions; and at least two are in pretty general circulation. According to one, a party of Thugs, having destroyed a traveller, left the body, as usual, unburied, in perfect confidence of receiving the wonted aid from the goddess. A novice, however, unguardedly looking behind him, saw the patroness of the Thugs in the act of feasting on the corpse, one half of it hanging out of her mouth. According to another report, the person looking back was a slave; and the goddess was engaged, not in satisfying the demands of hunger, or gratifying a taste for luxury by swallowing the murdered traveller, but in tossing the body into the air; for what purpose does not appear. The offence to the goddess is said, also, to have been aggravated by the fact that she was not attired with sufficient strictness to satisfy her sense of decorum. Both tales

agree in representing the goddess as highly displeased, and as visiting her displeasure upon her servants, the Thugs, by condemning them to bury their victims themselves. Though she refused any longer to relieve the earth of the loathsome burdens with which her worshippers encumbered it, she was so considerate as to present her friends with one of her teeth for a pickaxe, a rib for a knife, and the hem of her lower garment for a noose. Whether or not this origin of the pickaxe be generally received, it is certain that this instrument is held by the Thugs, throughout India, in the highest veneration. Its fabrication is superintended with the greatest care; and it is consecrated to the holy duty to which it is destined with many ceremonies. In the first place, a lucky day must be fixed upon: the leader of the gang then instructs a smith to make the required tool, and the process is conducted with the most profound secrecy. The door is peremptorily closed against all intrusion; the leader never quits the forge while the manufacture is going on; and the smith must engage in no other work till his sacred task is completed. The pickaxe, being made, must next be consecrated. Certain days of the week are deemed more auspicious for this purpose than the rest: Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Friday, enjoy the distinction. Care is taken that the shadow of no living thing may fall on the axe, as this would contaminate the devoted implement, and frustrate all the pains that had been taken in its formation. A doctor most deeply versed in the learning of the Thugs undertakes the solemn office of consecration. He sits down with his face to the west, and receives the pickaxe in a brass dish. The instrument which is to supply the want occasioned by the cessation of the goddess's personal labors is first washed in water, which is received into a pit dug for the purpose. The pickaxe then receives three other ablutions. The second washing is made with a mixture of sugar and water; the third with sour milk; and the fourth with ardent spirits. With red lead the pickaxe is marked, from the head to the point, with seven spots. It is again placed on the brass dish, and, with it, a cocoa-nut, some cloves, white sandal-wood, sugar, and a few other articles. A fire is now kindled, and the fuel consists of dried cow-dung and the wood of the mango or byr-tree. All the articles deposited in the brass pan are, with the exception of the cocoa-nut, thrown into the fire; and when the flame rises, the Thug priest, holding the pickaxe with both hands, passes it seven times through the fire. The cocoa-nut is now stripped of its outer coat, and

placed on the ground. The controller of the pickaxe, holding it by the point, then says, "Shall I strike?" The by-standers signifying their assent, he strikes the cocoa-nut with the butt-end of the pickaxe, and breaks it, exclaiming, "All hail, mighty Davy,* great Mother of us all!" The surrounding spectators respond, "All hail, Davy! and prosper the Thugs!" This is a most interesting and exciting moment; for, upon the hardness of the nut, the skill of the operator, and the accidental circumstances which may affect the force or direction of the blow, depends the realization of the hopes of the community. If the cocoa-nut be not severed at one blow, all the labor is thrown away; the goddess is understood to be unpropitious; another day must be selected for the repetition of the ceremonies, and all the trouble be incurred again. If, however, the nut is cleft at once, the proof of the approval of the goddess is indisputable. The whole of the shell, and some of the kernel of the nut, is thrown into the fire; the pickaxe is carefully tied up in a clean white cloth, and, being placed on the ground to the west, the assembled spectators, turning in that direction, prostrate themselves in adoration before "that which their own hands have made;" that which the labor of the smith might have fashioned with equal facility into an object of reverence or of contempt; and which, while it receives divine honors, is destined to assist in a series of acts most horrible and disgusting.

The ceremony of prostration concluded, all present receive a portion of the cocoa-nut. The fragments are then collected, and thrown into the pit which had been previously prepared, lest, if they remained on the ground, the sacred relics might be outraged by the defiling touch of some human foot. These ceremonies, elaborate as they are, suffice only for a single expedition.

When the sacred pickaxe is thus prepared, it must be placed in safe custody: it is not every Thug who can be trusted with it. The person who bears it is selected, principally, for his shrewdness, caution, and sobriety. It is, however, only when on a journey that it is intrusted to human care at all. When in camp, it is deposited in the earth, under the especial protection of the goddess. When buried, it is always placed with the point in the direction in which the party intend to proceed; and they have the fullest confidence that, if another course is to be preferred, the point will be found to have veered round so as to indicate the better way.

* Davy, Bhowanee, and Kalee, are different names of the same goddess.

When the pickaxe is buried, no foot must touch the earth which covers it; nor must it, at any time, be approached by an unclean animal, or any object which bears contamination. After each time that it has been used for the preparation of a grave, it must be submitted to the purification of the bath.

If the pickaxe falls from the hand of the man who bears it, dismay spreads through the gang. The omen is regarded as of the most fearful description: its horrors are aggravated by uncertainty as to the nature of the approaching evil, and even as to the party upon whom it is to descend. The omen may indicate the death of the individual who had the care of the sacred weapon, and who, through heedlessness or unavoidable fatality, suffered it to drop from his embrace; or it may forebode some dreadful reverse to the fortunes of the gang. Measures are immediately taken to frustrate the evil omen; and the first step is, to deprive the unhappy pickaxe-bearer of his office.

The enterprise in which they are engaged, whatever it be, is immediately abandoned; and the pickaxe must be consecrated anew. Even these precautions are insufficient to restore things to their original state. The misfortune upon the gang is a sentence of excommunication from the society of all faithful Thugs. No other party will ever associate with one whose pickaxe has fallen, lest they should be involved in the evil which is apprehended to the "doomed ones."

The pickaxe affords the most solemn sanction of an oath among these murderers; and if any sanction can bind their consciences, it is, perhaps, the only one capable of effecting that purpose. Compared with it, neither the water of the Ganges weighs with the Hindoo, nor the Koran with the Mussulman. "If any man swears to a falsehood upon a pickaxe properly consecrated," said the Thugs, "we will consent to be hanged if he survive the time appointed. Appoint one, two, or three days, when he swears, and we pledge ourselves that he does not live a moment beyond the time. He will die a horrid death; his head will turn round, his face towards the back; and he will writhe in torture till he dies." The pickaxe is, in short, the standard around which all the gloomy family of Thug superstitions rally; it is regarded as the great source of security and prosperity. The instrument of strangulation is held in esteem; but that of burial in infinitely more; the Thugs think of it with enthusiasm. "Do we not," said one interrogated by Captain Sleeman — "do

we not worship it every seventh day? Is it not our standard? Is its sound ever heard, when digging the grave, by any but a Thug? And can any man ever swear to a falsehood upon it?" "How could we dig graves," asked another, "with any other instrument? This is the one appointed by Davy, and consecrated; and we should never have survived the attempt to use any other. No man," it was added, "but a Thug, who has been a strangler, and is remarkable for his cleanliness and decorum, is permitted to carry it."

The Thugs profess to believe that their system of murder and plunder was instituted by Kalee, the goddess whom they serve, and is, consequently, of divine origin. This they attempt to prove by the following legend: —

In remote ages, a demon infested the earth, and devoured mankind as soon as created. This devouring monster was so gigantic, that the water did not reach his waist in the unfathomable parts of the ocean; and he strode over the world unrestrained, rioting in the destruction of the human race. The world was thus kept unpeopled, until the goddess of the Thugs came to the rescue. She attacked the demon, and cut him down; but from every drop of his blood another demon arose; and though the goddess continued to cut down these rising demons with wonderful alacrity and scientific skill, other demons sprang from their blood, and the diabolical race consequently multiplied with fearful rapidity. The never-ending labor of cutting down demons, whose number was only increased by this operation, at length fatigued and disheartened the goddess. She found it indispensably necessary to make a change in her tactics; — and here the tale, which is thus far universally received, becomes subject to variations. It is admitted by all Hindoos, that the demons multiplied in the manner described; but there is a difference of opinion respecting the manner in which they were finally disposed of. The orthodox opinion is that, when the goddess found the drops of blood thus rapidly passing into demons, — a fact which, with all her divine attributes, it seems, she only learned by experience, — she hit upon a very happy expedient to prevent the blood reaching the earth, where the demoniacal transformation took place. Being furnished with a tongue of extraordinary dimensions, she, after every blow, promptly and carefully licked the blood away! A preventive check being thus placed upon the further propagation of demons, the goddess was enabled to destroy, at her leisure, those previ-

ously existing. Such is the commonly received account of the goddess's dexterity and address. That of the *Thugs* is varied, for the purpose of affording a superhuman sanction to their mode of assassination. According to Thug mythology, the goddess, when she became embarrassed by the constant reënforcements of the demon army which accrued from her labors, relinquished all personal efforts for their suppression, and formed two men from the perspiration brushed from her arms. To each of these men she gave a handkerchief; how fabricated, at a time when reels and looms were not, is a question open to the discussion of the learned. With these handkerchiefs they were commanded to put all the demons to death, without shedding a drop of blood. It does not appear why the goddess might not thus have plied the handkerchief herself: it may be presumed that she was too much exhausted by her previous exertions. Her commands, however, were faithfully executed; and the demons were all strangled without delay.

There is some difficulty in understanding how demons so powerful succumbed thus readily to two agents, who, though sprung from an exudation of the goddess's arms, were, as appears by the sequel of the tale, merely children of mortality. But the difficulty never seems to have occurred to the Thugs, whose faith, like that of the mass of their countrymen, is of a very unscrupulous character. The story is wound up with such poetical justice as might be expected in a Hindoo legend. The champions, having vanquished all the demons, offered, like honest men, to return the handkerchiefs; but their patroness, in the spirit of a grateful goddess, desired that they would retain them, not merely as memorials of their heroism, but as the implements of a lucrative trade in which their descendants were to labor and thrive. They were not only permitted, but commanded, to strangle men, as they had strangled demons. They forbore, indeed, to exercise this privilege for a long period, and several generations passed before Thuggee became practised as a profession. Whether this forbearance was founded on the principle according to which a sportsman suffers game to accumulate, is not stated. The privilege slept; but, though dormant, it was not lost; and in due time it was abundantly exercised. The lapse between the grant of the patent and the use of it might tend to raise a presumption against its having been granted; but Hindoo casuists are not accustomed to scrutinize evidence with the severity which prevails in Westminster Hall.

Interior of a Cave Temple at Ellora.

The conviction of the divine origin of Thuggee is strengthened in the minds of its followers by the belief that its mysteries are exhibited by the numerous images sculptured on the walls of the cave temples at Ellora. On this subject is the following conversation of Captain Sleeman, in the employment of the East India Company, and some Thugs who had become witnesses for the prosecution instituted against their confederates.

Capt. S. You told Mr. Johnstone, the traveller, while he was at Saugor, that the operations of your trade were to be seen in the caves of Ellora.

Feringeea. All! Every one of the operations is to be seen there. In one place, you see men strangling; in another, burying the bodies; in another, carrying them off to the graves. There is not an operation in Thuggee that is not exhibited in the caves of Ellora.

Dorgha. In those caves are to be seen the operations of every trade in the world.

Chotee. Whenever we passed near, we used to go and see these caves. Every man will there find his trade described, however secret he may think it; and they were all made in one night.

Capt. S. Does any person besides yourselves consider that any of these figures represent Thugs?

Feringeea. Nobody else. But all Thugs know that they do. We never told any body else what we thought about them. Every body there can see the secret operations of his trade; but he does not tell others of them; and no other person can understand what they mean. They are the works of God. No human hands were employed upon them; that every body admits.

Capt. S. What particular operations are there represented by the sculptures?

Sahib Khan. I have seen the sotha, (inveigler,) sitting upon the same carpet with the traveller, and in close conversation with him, just as we are when we are worming out their secrets. In another place, the strangler has got his roomal over his neck, and is strangling him; while another, the chumochee, is holding him by the legs. These are the only two operations that I have seen represented.

Nasir. These I have also seen; and there is no mistaking them. The chumochee has close hold of the legs, and is pulling at them, *thus;* while the bhurtote is tightening the roomal round his neck, *thus!*

Capt. S. Have you seen no others?

Feringeea. I have seen these two; and also the lughas carrying away the bodies to the grave, in this manner, and the sextons digging the grave with the sacred pickaxe. All is done just as if we had ourselves done it: nothing could be more exact.

Capt. S. And who do you think could have executed this work?

Feringeea. It could not have been done by Thugs, because they would never have exposed the secret of their trade; and no other human being could have done it. It must be the work of the gods; human hands could never have performed it.

Capt. S. And, supposing so, you go and worship it?

Sahib Khan. No. We go to gratify curiosity, and not to worship. We look upon it as a mausoleum, a collection of curious figures cut by some demons, who knew the secrets of all mankind, and amused themselves here in describing them.

The high office of a strangler is not attained until after a novitiate of considerable length. When the disciple has been sufficiently prepared, or at least when he believes that the conquest of natural feeling is so far complete as to enable him to perform, without shrinking, that which he has learned to contemplate without horror, he applies to one of the most experienced and respected of the gang to become his *gooroo.* This word appears to be derived from the *goor*, or coarse sugar, which forms an important ingredient in the ceremonies of initiation; and the office of the person honored with this title is, to introduce the aspirant to the actual exercise of his profession; to instruct him in the science of hangmanship; and to preside

over the rites by which the pupil is to be consecrated to his diabolical work. Precautions are taken that the young beginner may not be embarrassed by difficulties. A victim is selected, for his first essay in guilt, whose strength is below the average; and the chosen period of operation is at the moment when the senses of the traveller are bewildered by being suddenly roused from sleep. While the latter is reposing himself, the preparation takes place. The gooroo takes the pupil into a field, accompanied by three or four of the older members of the gang, and the ceremonies commence by the whole party facing in the direction in which they intend to move. The gooroo then proceeds to take the auspices; and, having invoked a favorable sign from the goddess, half an hour is allowed for the fulfilment of their wishes. If in the course of that time the required sign is obtained, all is well, and the goddess is believed to regard the attempt of the young Thug with benignity; but if no sign is obtained, or if it is of an unfavorable nature, the ambition of the novice is for that time disappointed, and the destined victim must fall by hands already practised in the murderous work.

If the sanction of the goddess be indicated, the group retire, in high spirits, to the place where the sleeping traveller awaits his death. The gooroo then, turning to the west, takes a handkerchief, and ties at one end a knot, in which he encloses a rupee. This knot is of a peculiar description, and the privilege of tying it confined to those who have been regularly introduced to their occupation. The clumsy intruder, who has not participated in the advantages derived from a regular apprenticeship to the art, leaves the end of the roomal exposed: the more accomplished practitioner manifests his science and elegance by concealing the end within the knot. This is the mark of his regular induction, and the ribbon of the order to which he has the honor to belong.

The knot being duly tied by the gooroo, the roomal is delivered to the incipient strangler, who receives it with all the reverence due to so precious a gift, bestowed by such venerated hands. The interest of the scene now increases. The executioner, attended by a *ghumgeea*, or holder of hands, stands before his victim, whose tranquil state is but an emblem of that deeper sleep which is about to seal his eyes forever. His last earthly slumber is gradually interrupted; the victim is roused for slaughter; the fatal noose is cast over his neck by the hand of the youthful assassin, and, with the aid of the attendant ruf-

fian, the work is soon completed. One human being has passed into eternity; another has taken the last step in guilt and infamy!

The horrible work is over; and, so far from being actuated by any sensations of pity or remorse, the wretch, who has attested the strength of his nerves and the weakness of his moral perceptions, knows no feeling but that of delight, flowing from gratified ambition. To his instructor, guide, and priest, his gratitude is boundless: he bows before his gooroo, and touches his feet with both hands, in token of the deepest and most affectionate respect. But his gratitude, if confined to the person of his preceptor, would be felt to be inadequate and niggardly. The relations and friends of the reverend man are entitled to share the warm feelings of the now accomplished assassin; and to them he tenders the same homage which he has previously paid to his father in crime.

A lucky omen is once more anxiously looked for; and, as soon as it is afforded, the newly-admitted strangler opens the knot tied in the handkerchief by the hands of his tutor, and takes out the rupee which had been placed within it. This coin, with all the other silver which he has, the pupil presents to the preceptor: the latter adds his own stock of money to the offering; and, after setting apart one rupee and a quarter to the purchase of goor for the *tapoonee*, the remainder is expended in sweatmeats.

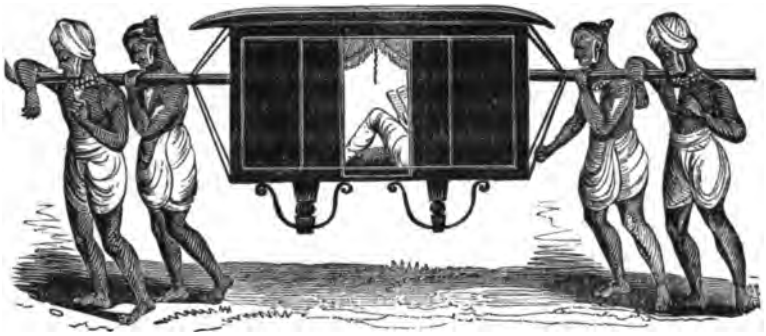
The tapoonee is a solemn sacrifice performed after every murder. The goor is placed upon a blanket or sheet, spread upon a clean spot. On the cloth, near the goor, is deposited the consecrated pickaxe, and a piece of silver for an offering. The Thug whose reputation for professional learning stands the highest, and who is supposed to enjoy the largest share of the favor of the goddess, also takes his place on the cloth, with his face to the west: the most accomplished and scientific stranglers are associated with him in this place of honor. The number of this select body must be an even one; but its extent is limited only by the size of the cloth. Those of the higher grade who are unable to find accommodation among their brethren, and the vulgar herd who have no claim to distinction, arrange themselves around the cloth which bears the sacrifice and those who preside over it. The leader then makes a hole in the ground, and, having poured into it a little of the goor, clasps his hands in the attitude of fervent devotion, and raising them, in harmony with his upturned eyes, to heaven, gives utterance to the follow-

ing prayer: "Great goddess! as you vouchsafed one lac and sixty thousand rupees to Joora Naig and Koduck Bunwanee, in their need, so we pray thee fulfil our desires!" The enumeration of the precise number of thousands bestowed by the goddess upon her favorites is not very poetical; but the petition is so entirely accordant with Thug feeling, that no doubt can be entertained as to the sincerity with which it is offered. All the assembled followers repeat the prayer after the leader; and the latter, after sprinkling water on the pit and pickaxe, puts a little of the goor upon the head of each Thug who has been so fortunate as to obtain a seat upon the carpet. The signal for strangling is now given, as if a murder were actually about to be committed; and the Thugs, who have received the portions of goor, eat them in solemn silence. The most perfect stillness prevails, till these privileged persons have swallowed the precious morsels distributed to them, and diluted the repast by drinking some water. The goor is now given to all whose rank entitles them to partake of it; the greatest care being taken that no part shall fall to the ground. Should such an accident happen, the fallen fragments are carefully collected, and deposited in the pit. The misfortune is thus alleviated, so far as human prudence can avail, by preserving the hapless relics of the sugar, consecrated to murder, from contamination by the foot of man.

The sacred goor is not imparted to all Thugs indiscriminately: two conditions are necessary, to qualify them for a share of it. The participant must be in a state of freedom, servitude barring his admission to the privilege: the only remaining disqualification is found in innocence of murder. None but the practical assassin can be allowed to partake of the sacred goor; no one, but he whose hands have performed the office of strangling, is thought worthy of the food which derives its sanctity from the prayers of stranglers. For those who cannot boast the name of freemen, or whom youth, fear, or ill-fortune has withheld from performing, on any of their fellow-men, the honorable act of strangulation, some sugar is set apart, before it acquires its holy character. This the excluded eat, at the time when their more favored associates partake of that portion which has been sanctified. The sweetmeats which have been provided are distributed among the gang generally.

The expedition being closed, and the members of the community having retired to their quarters, the happy individual, who has passed from a state of pupilage into the maturity of a prac-

tised assassin, entertains his gooroo at a feast as magnificent as his circumstances will afford. If he have the means of defraying the expense, not only the immediate members of the gooroo's family, but all his relatives, are invited, and the grateful murderer equips his tutor, from head to foot, with a complete array of new vestments. The same compliment is paid to the gooroo's lady, and sometimes to all his relatives. Soon after this feast, the gooroo invites his pupil to an entertainment. The connection between them is henceforward indissoluble; and the most intimate and sacred relations of nature are considered as nothing, in comparison with it. A Thug will rather betray his father than the gooroo by whom he has been introduced to the honors of his profession.



A Thug riding in a Palanquin to a Feast prepared by his Gooroo.

The dignity and sanctity with which murder is invested by the creed of the Thugs afford lamentable proof of the inseparable connection subsisting between the corruption of religion and the corruption of morals. To obliterate all religious feeling from the heart of man is a difficult, if not an impossible task; to substitute superstitious belief for reasonable faith is, unhappily, a very easy one; and sound morals invariably disappear with sound religion. Indeed, between false religion and false morals there is a mutual action and reaction. The wayward desires of man lead him to indulge in that which true religion forbids: he therefore seeks shelter in a false one. Again; superstition sanctions, and even commands, practices against which pure morality revolts: hence the moral judgment is depraved, the restraints of conscience abolished, and that feeling which should conduct men to all that is good, and pure, and excellent, becomes the pilot to every vice, and the prompter of the most horrible crimes.

The effect of the consecrated sugar, or goor, is believed to be irresistible. Captain Sleeman, having reproached some of the fraternity on account of a murder marked by many ferocious and unmanly features, one of the party replied, "We all feel pity sometimes; but the goor of the taponee changes our nature: it would change the nature of a horse. Let any man once taste of that goor, and he will be a Thug, though he know all the trades, and have all the wealth, in the world. I never wanted food. My mother's family was opulent; her relations high in office. I have been high in office myself, and became so great a favorite, wherever I went, that I was sure of promotion; yet I was always miserable when absent from my gang, and obliged to return to Thuggee. My father made me taste of that fatal goor when I was yet a mere boy; and if I were to live a thousand years, I should never be able to follow any other trade."

A Mahometan at Prayer.

The superstitions of the Thugs are all of Hindoo origin; yet Mahometans adopt them with a belief equally implicit, and a devotion equally ardent. They pay divine honors to Kalee, the

impersonation of destruction, which, in the eyes of all sound Mahometans, must be idolatry — a crime severely denounced in the Koran, and held by all good Mussulmans in abhorrence.

Their mode of escaping the difficulties in which they are involved, by the inconsistency of their creed with their practice, is illustrated by a conversation held by Captain Sleeman with some Mahometan Thugs.

Capt. S. Has Bhowanee been any where named in the Koran?

Sahib. Nowhere.

"Here," (says Captain Sleeman,) "a Mussulman Thug interposed, and said he thought Bhowanee, and Fatima, the daughter of Mahomet, were one and the same person; and that it was Fatima who invented the use of the roomal, to strangle the great demon Rukut-beejdana. This led to a discussion between him and some of my Mussulman native officers, who did not like to find the amiable Fatima made a goddess of Thuggee."

Capt. S. Then has Bhowanee any thing to do with your Paradise?

Sahib. Nothing.

Capt. S. She has no influence upon your future state?

Sahib. None.

Capt. S. Does Mahomet, your prophet, any where sanction crimes like yours; — the murder in cold blood of your fellow-creatures, for the sake of their money?

Sahib. No.

Capt. S. Does he not say that such crimes will be punished by God in the next world?

Sahib. Yes.

Capt. S. Then do you never feel any dread of punishment hereafter?

Sahib. Never. We never murder unless the omens are favorable; and we consider favorable omens as the mandates of the deity.

Capt. S. What deity?

Sahib. Bhowanee.

Capt. S. But Bhowanee, you say, has no influence upon the welfare, or otherwise, of your soul hereafter.

Sahib. None, we believe; but she influences our fates in this world; and what she orders, in this world, we believe that God will not punish in the next.

The conjoint adoration of the deities of different and discord-

ant creeds is neither new nor uncommon in the East. In the Old Testament many instances are recorded, in which nations, as well as individuals, paid a divided homage to the true God and to a multiplicity of idols; and, in various parts of India, the Mahometans, from having long been surrounded by a Hindoo population, have been led to adopt many of their opinions and practices.

Indru, King of the minor Deities.

In another interview, one of the Thug witnesses was asked —

Capt. Sleeman. And do you never feel sympathy for the persons murdered, — never pity or compunction?

Sahib. Never.

Capt. S. How can you murder old men and young children without some emotions of pity, — calmly and deliberately, as they sit with you, and converse with you, and tell you of their private affairs?

Sahib. From the time that the omens have been favorable,

we consider them as victims thrown into our hands by the deity, to be killed, and that we are the mere instrument in her hands to destroy them; that if we do not kill them, she will never be again propitious to us, and we and our families will be involved in misery and want.

Capt. S. And you can sleep as soundly, by the bodies or over the graves of those you have murdered, and eat your meals with as much appetite, as ever?

Sahib. Just the same. We sleep and eat just the same, unless we are afraid of being discovered.

Capt. S. And when you see or hear a bad omen, you think it is the order of the deity not to kill the travellers you have with you, or are in pursuit of?

Sahib. Yes: it is the order not to kill them, and we dare not disobey.

Some Thugs let very poor travellers escape, in hope of finding better game: others regard forbearance, in such a case, as an act of abominable impiety. A further extract will show the respective views of these conflicting sects, and the reasoning by which they are supported.

Capt. S. When you have a poor traveller with you, or a party of travellers who appear to have little property about them, and you hear or see a very good omen, do you not let them go, in the hope that the return of the omen will guide you to better prey?

Dorgha, (Mussulman.) Let them go? Never, never!

Nasir, (Mussulman of Telingana.) How could we let them go? Is not the good omen the order from Heaven to kill them? and would it not be disobedience to let them go? If we did not kill them, should we ever get any more travellers?

Feringeea, (Brahman.) I have known the experiment tried with good effect. I have known travellers, who promised little, let go; and the virtue of the omen brought better.

Inaent, (Mussulman.) Yes; the virtue of the omen remains; and the traveller who has little should be let go; for you are sure to get a better.

Sahib Khan, (of Telingana.) Never, never! This is one of your Hindoostanee heresies. You could never let him go, without losing all the fruits of your expedition. You might get property, but it would never do you any good. No success could result from your disobedience.

Morlee, (Rajpoot.) Certainly not. The travellers who are in

our hands, when we have a good omen, must never be let go, whether they promise little or much. The omen is unquestionably the order, as Nasir says.

Nasir. The idea of securing the good-will of Davy by disobeying her order is quite monstrous. We Deccan Thugs do not understand how you got hold of it. Our ancestors never were guilty of such folly.

Feringeea. You do not mean to say, that we of Murnae and Sindouse were not as well instructed as you of Telingana?

Nasir and *Sahib Khan.* We only mean to say, that you have clearly mistaken the nature of a good omen in this case. It is the order of Davy to take what she has put in our way; at least, so we in the Deccan understand it.

So long as the Thugs were faithful to their Kalee, — so long as they attended to all the rites, the ceremonies, and offerings, by which they rendered to her worship and honor, — so long as the order remained pure, and was not contaminated by the low and disreputable castes who never fail to infect those with whom they are associated, — so long they prospered in their profession, and so long did they enjoy the favor and the protection of their deity. But now, in consequence of these corruptions, they have fallen under her displeasure, and their system is likely to be exploded.

In obedience to the supposed commands of Kalee, the traveller was arrested on his journey; the ascetic was strangled on his road to Juggernaut; the young, sometimes, have had their brains dashed out against a stone, and the old have had no mercy shown to them on account of their infirmities; the beautiful female has been treated with the same ferocious cruelty as the bold and daring; the wealthy merchant has lost his life, as well as his gains and his riches; and the rajah, equipped for his journey, attended by his friends, his servants, and his train of followers, accompanied by his elephants, his horses, his camels, his oxen, and all the paraphernalia of Eastern grandeur, has, with all his attendants, been murdered in a moment. The kindness of friendship, the claims of hospitality, the interchange of social intercourse, the solemn promise, vows of protection to the young, the infirm, and the lovely, — were, by these cruel murderers, entirely disregarded; and when a kind host has been entertaining them at his table, and reposing his confidence in their brotherly regard, many of his guests have been engaged, outside the tent, in preparing his tomb, and have given him and his relatives a sepulchre, as a reward for his entertainment.

Returning from a sacrifice of animals at a Temple of Kalee.

A Thug leader, possessed of most polished manners and great eloquence, being asked by a native whether he never felt compunction in murdering innocent people, answered, with a smile, "Does any man feel compunction in following his trade? and are not all our trades assigned us by Providence?" The native gentleman said, "How many people have you, in the course of your life, killed with your own hands, at a rough guess?" "I have killed none!" "Have you not been just describing to me a number of murders?" "Yes; but do you suppose I could have committed them? Is any man killed from man's killing? *Admeeke marne se koee murta.* Is it not the hand of God that kills him? and are we not mere instruments in the hand of God?"

Fatalism is a prominent dogma of the creed of the Thugs; and they consider themselves, in the exercise of their trade, to be entirely exempt from moral responsibility. Yet, in the attention to omens, or in the neglect of these instructions, they strangely enough appear to regard themselves as free agents, who may expect reward for obedience and punishment for disobedience. In their view, to commit murder is inevitable, and a matter of necessity: to murder according to rule is an act of choice; and to choose aright is meritorious.

How, it may well be asked, could such a fraternity grow up in Hindoostan, and be permitted to carry on their depredations for so many ages? But the same religion that allowed the mother to strangle her infant, that suffered the Brahmans to offer up their human sacrifices, that commanded the helpless female to mount the funeral pile, that encouraged the devotee to throw himself under the wheels of Juggernaut, patronized the Thugs in their assassinations, and gave them the license of plunder at their will. What class in the community, then, could dispute their right, or question their authority? Many of the native rajahs had licensed the infamous system; a certain tax was levied upon every house which was known to be inhabited by a Thug; and, under the sanction of the law and the government, the assassin was permitted to carry on his atrocious deeds throughout the country. Nay, such was the encouragement these murderers received, and so useful were they to the public treasury, that, when the British government resolved to put them down, and applied to the independent princes to coöperate with it in accomplishing this object, the rajah of Joudpoor contended that he had a right to protect the Thugs, and refused to give up

those who had taken refuge in his territory; and had it not been for the firmness of Lord William Bentinck, who ordered an army to assemble on the frontier of his dominions, and showed him that it was impossible the Joudpoor province should become the rendezvous of a banditti who would commit their depredations with impunity upon the other states of the empire, the system would have flourished, under such protection, to this day.

SPECIMENS

OF

THE SHASTERS,

OR

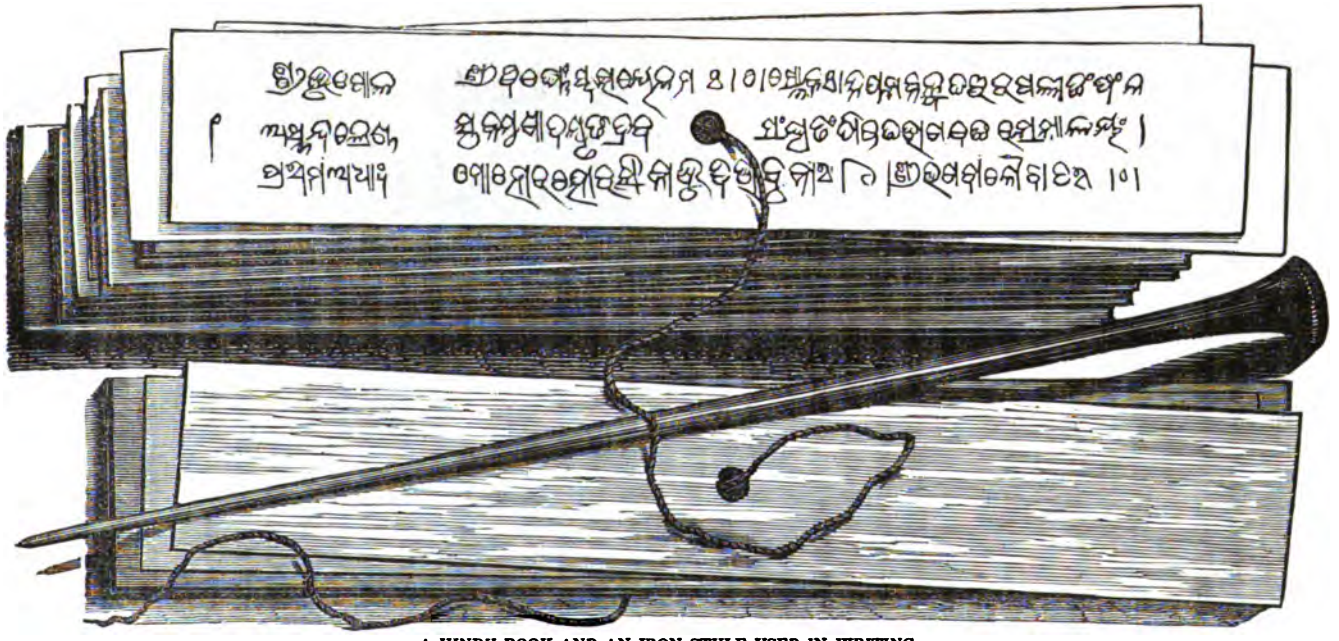
SACRED BOOKS OF THE BRAHMINS;

CONSISTING OF

SONGS, LEGENDARY TALES, ETC.,

WRITTEN 3000 YEARS AGO.

PUBLISHED BY CALEB WRIGHT.



A HINDU BOOK AND AN IRON STYLE USED IN WRITING..

In the middle and southern parts of Hindustan, books are written on palm leaf. A volume of ordinary size is about eighteen inches in length, two in width, and four in thickness. The one represented by the engraving is only six inches in length. It is in the Orea language, and is open at the first page, exhibiting a fac-simile of the writing.

A

DESCRIPTION OF THE SHASTERS.

By J. J. WEITBRECHT,

FOR MANY YEARS A RESIDENT IN INDIA.

A learned Brahmin, on being asked how many volumes their Shasters contained, replied, "Who is able to calculate that? No man can number them; the palace of the Rajah of Burdwan would not contain them; they are like the ocean, unfathomable, without measure, and without end."

That celebrated searcher into Hindu mythology, Sir William Jones, appeared to coincide in the same view, when, in astonishment and surprise, he exclaimed, "To whatever part of this literature we may direct our attention, we are every where struck with the thought of infinity." The Iliad of Homer numbers twenty-four thousand verses, but the Mahabharat of the Hindus four hundred thousand; and the Purannas, comprehending only a small portion of their religious books, extend to two millions of verses.

The Hindus divide the voluminous masses of their Shasters into eighteen parts, asserting that they contain eighteen distinct kinds of knowledge. To the first class belong the Four Vedas. The Brahmins believe these to be as old as eternity. They also assert that they were communicated to mankind, not through the medium of a mortal, but by the mouth of Brahma himself.

The Vedas consist of a compilation of prayers, called *Muntrus*; and, at a later period, a collection of doctrines and precepts, which are called *Brahmanas*, was added. They detail an endless number of ceremonies which are to be performed by the priest, the ascetic, and the hermit, at their religious services.

One of the oldest sages of Hindu antiquity collected the Brahmanas, or religious statutes from the Vedas, into special tracts, with the title of *Upanishads*. This compilation is a kind of compendium of Hindu theology, generally known under the appellation of *Vedanta*.

There have been men, professed Christians, who have spoken with enthusiastic admiration of the Hindu writings. Their primitive religion, it has been said, contained the most sublime doctrines, and inculcated the most pure morality. But this is an egregious delusion. "Many an object appears beautiful when seen at a distance, and through a mist; but, when you approach it nearer, you will smile at the deception. As you become more intimately acquainted with the Shasters, you must feel struck with the absurd character of their doctrines, and the laxity of their morals."

The second class of sacred books treat on the art of healing, music, war, architecture, and sixty-four various mechanical arts. Hence you perceive the Shasters of the Hindus teach not merely religion, but every kind of science and knowledge. By far the most numerous class of Shasters is comprehended in the poetical works of the Purannas, treating on the creation of the world, the power and attributes of the gods, the incarnations of Vishnu, &c. Among the most interesting of these may be numbered the Mahabharat and Bhagavat Gita. The latter contains a description of Krishna's life. The Ramayun, an epic poem, gives a history of Ram, an incarnation of Vishnu. The historical details afford remarkable specimens of the ancient history of Hindustan. In the preface of the Ramayun it is stated, "He who constantly hears and sings this poem will obtain the highest bliss, and will become like the gods."

Besides these, there is an endless mass of writings, counted sacred, namely, the Nyay Shasters, the Smritis, the Mimangsa, of philosophical, juristical, and metaphysical tendency.

The age of the Vedas has never been ascertained with any degree of certainty. Some enthusiastic admirers of them put them far before the time of the deluge. A learned professor in America actually requested Sir W. Jones to search among the Hindus for the Adamic books. The amazing credulity of skeptics and unbelievers, in every thing except the records of the Sacred Scriptures, is notorious. The latter gentleman, who is regarded as one of the most profound scholars in Hindu antiquity, concluded, from internal and external evidence, the age of the Vedas to be about three thousand years; accordingly, they stand in antiquity nearest to the books of Moses. All the other Sanscrit writings are of more recent date.

After this cursory glance into the impenetrable chaos of Hindu Shasters, we proceed a step farther. The question we have now

to consider is this: *What view has the Brahmin of a Divine Being?* and we shall be sadly mistaken if we expect to find in the Hindu Shasters a confession of faith laid down which the learned uniformly acknowledge as the groundwork of their belief.

As a north-wester hurricane in Bengal, after a glowing, fiery, hot day, mingles clouds with dust, leaves, wood, and earth, in its destructive course, so we find in the wild confusion of the Shasters all the nobler divine thoughts, and purer ideas of the majesty of God, interwoven and mixed up with the most puerile nonsense. You cannot lay your hand on one point of doctrine, which is not in conflict with another, or denied by some rival system.

The Hindu, however, acknowledges *one Supreme Being as the ground and foundation of his religion.* "Ek Brumho, dittyo nashti," — One God, and beside him no other, — this sentence is become a proverb, and is in the mouth of every Brahmin. His writings dignify this supreme and eternal Being with the title "Brahm," which is to be carefully distinguished from Brahma, an emanation of the former, and the first person in the Hindu trinity. The Shasters describe Brahm as a being without beginning and without end, almighty, omniscient, unchangeable; in short, as being possessed of all the divine attributes, as the sublimest conceptions of the Holy Scriptures describe Jehovah. This being, however, all spirit and without form, is devoid of qualities. The Shasters declare that the very idea of allowing attributes in Brahm renders a multiplication of him a necessary consequence. For this very reason, the Brahmin will not allow the God of the Bible, because to him it appears impossible and irrational to believe that spirit can act and create without being united with matter.

Brahm is therefore represented without mind, without will, without consciousness of his existence. No wonder that many Hindus, in going one step farther, declare the Supreme is nothing; for a spirit without power and energy is like a thing of nought. Nevertheless, it is asserted, on the other hand, that he enjoys the highest beatitude, — it is the bliss of a deep, uninterrupted sleep.

Brahm, however, must one day have awaked from his long sleep; or, in other words, the negative character of his existence must have changed into the positive. This was necessary for calling the world into existence. On this important point, the

different philosophical systems, headed by their respective leaders, have carried on a never-ceasing warfare.

Brahm awoke, say the Vedas, and, feeling desire arising, said, "Let me be many." Forthwith he took upon himself a material form; and henceforth he is like a spider, sitting in the centre, spinning out his interminable threads, and fastening what he produces from himself to the right and, left, towards all quarters of the infinite vacuum.

Here, then, the shell of Hinduism begins to open; the creation of the world, according to *its* teaching, is nothing more or less than a manifestation of Brahm in visible material forms. It is the most perfect system of pantheism. The cosmogony of the Shasters runs thus: All the germs or seed corns of the world that was to come into existence were condensed in the shape of an egg, and the supreme took possession of it in the form of Brahma. One year of the creation, or one thousand jugs, which, according to our reckoning, makes three hundred millions of common years, elapsed before the egg was hatched. During that long period, it was swimming like a bubble upon the mighty deep or chaos; its brightness resembled that of a thousand suns. At last it broke, and Brahma sprang forth. His appearance was terrific; he had a thousand heads, a thousand eyes, and a thousand arms — a suitable complement to undertake the work of creation. Another monstrous being escaped from the egg with him, evidently signifying the crude materials from which the great mundane machine was to be prepared. The hairs of this monster were the trees and plants of the forests, his head the clouds, his beard the lightning, his breath the atmosphere, his voice the thunder, his eyes the sun and moon, his nails the rocks, his bones the mountains of the earth. When the egg was fabricated, Brahm, as creator, retired from the scene; and henceforth he troubled himself no longer with the concerns of the world. He relapsed into his former sleep, and nothing will disturb him in his dreams until the time when the dissolution of the present universe is to awaken him to renewed activity.

No temple in India is consecrated to this "unknown God." The reason of this is obvious: the Hindu expects nothing, fears nothing, hopes nothing from a god who is asleep, wrapped up in sweet dreams, and who has communicated his power to those who are now managing the government of the world as his delegates.

When the great egg opened, it brought forth, likewise, the three

worlds, viz., the uppermost, which is inhabited by the gods, the middle, intended for the dwelling-place of man, and the infernal world, destined to be the habitation of demons and all sorts of fearful beings.

The earth, according to the description of the Shasters, is a flat plain of circular form, resembling the water-lily, measuring four hundred millions of miles in circumference. The inhabitable part of it consists of seven islands of similar shape, each of which is surrounded by an ocean. The innermost island, bounded by the ocean of salt water, is called *Jampadwip;* the second island is surrounded by a sea consisting of the juice of the sugar-cane; the sea surrounding the third contains spirituous liquors; the fourth, clarified butter; the fifth, sour milk; the sixth, sweet milk; and the seventh contains sweet water. Beyond the latter there is a land of pure gold, but inaccessible to man; and far beyond it extends the land of darkness and the hell. The earth is resting upon an enormous snake with a hundred heads, and the snake upon a tortoise. Whenever the former shakes one of his heads, an earthquake is caused thereby. The bigoted Brahmin is firmly persuaded of the indubitable fact, that no circumnavigator of the globe has ever succeeded in passing beyond the salt-water ocean; and let the English become ever so skilful in the art of navigation, they will always be obliged to sail within its confines.

In the centre of the vast plain of the earth, which is two hundred and fifty thousand miles in diameter, the loftiest of all mountains, Sumeru, rises to the enormous height of more than two hundred thousand miles. It is crowned with three golden summits, which are the favorite residences of Brahma, Vishnu, and Shiva. The highest clouds reach to about a third part of the height of the mountain. At the foot of this mountain there are three smaller hills, placed like sentinels, on the top of each of which grows the mangoe-tree, above two thousand miles in height. These trees bear a fruit, as delicious as nectar, which measures several hundred feet in diameter. When it falls to the ground, juice exudes from it, whose spicy fragrance perfumes the air; and those who eat thereof diffuse a most agreeable smell for many miles around them. The rose-apple-tree is likewise growing on those hills, the fruit of which is as large as an elephant, and so full of juice that at the season of maturity it flows along in a stream, and whatever it touches in its course is changed into the purest

gold. Here is a specimen of geography, which surpasses all *our* preconceived and short-sighted notions of the globe we inhabit!

I mentioned above that the cosmogonies in the mythology of the Hindus are many. One of the most popular among them deserves to be noticed. The god Vishnu slept in the depth of the ocean. From him grew a water-lily, which swam on the surface of the water, and out of which proceeded Brahma, to whom the gods delivered the work of the creation of the universe. In order to accomplish his purpose, he led for a long time the life of an ascetic. But he was unsuccessful. The disappointment drove him into a rage, and the tears gushed from his eyes. Out of these briny drops arose gigantic beings of terrific shape. One of his deepest sighs over this sad catastrophe produced the god Rodru, that is, light and warmth, who, upon Brahma's request, undertook the continuation of the arduous task. But it did not proceed in his hands. Brahma was therefore obliged to resume it again; and, after much anxiety, various beings issued from his fingers, ears, and other members. The work then advanced with more success; and fire, earth, and wind, followed each other in quick succession.

Upon this, Brahma divided himself into human forms, and created men; then he assumed the shape of a bullock, and afterwards that of a horse, and thus produced the various kinds of four-footed animals, birds, &c. In this way the uncounted multitudes of animated beings, which now people the earth and other worlds, rose gradually into existence.

Thus you see how the idea of pantheism pervades the base fiction of this very absurd and immoral history of the creation. To create is, in fact, nothing but a manifestation of Brahma in new forms; he becomes an elephant, a mountain, a river; and thus he produces and propagates the different species of living beings. The whole universe is a portion of himself. In this view he is represented in the Vedas: "Brahma is not separated from the creation: he is the light of the sun, of the moon, and of the fire; the Vedas are the breath of his nostrils; the primitive elements are his eyes; the shaking movements of events are his laugh; his sleep is the destruction of the world. In various forms he enlivens the creature: in the form of fire, he digests their nourishment; in the form of air, he preserves their life; as water, he quenches their thirst; as the sun, he ripens the fruits; as the moon, he gives them refreshing sleep. The progress of time is the step of his foot. Brahma hears and sees every thing. He

Brahma.

Hoonemaun.

Shiva.

cultivates the field; he is turned into a cloud to give it moisture; he becomes corn and satisfies mankind. While he dwells in the body, he sustains its vital warmth; if he withdraw, it will get cold and die. He destroys sin in the devout, as the cotton thread is singed in the fire. He is the source of all truth and of all lies. He who takes his refuge to him will become holy; he who turns his face from him will become a blasphemer." Such is one of the most sublime songs which the priests sing in honor of their Creator.

The distinction of caste is traced in its origin to the *creation of man.* By successive emanations from himself, Brahma called various classes of mankind into existence. First the Brahmin escaped from his mouth, as the representative of God in human form. The nature of his birth signified him to be, not only the highest and most exalted of all human beings, but likewise the intended teacher, and the mediator between the gods and mankind. From the arm of Brahma, the defence of the body, sprung the Kshutryu, or the caste of warriors; the object of whose creation was evident, from the nature of his birth: he was to protect the people by his powerful arm, and to shield and defend his brethren against the aggression and oppression of the wicked. From Brahma's breast issued the Voishnu, or caste of merchants and tradesmen, to provide for the necessities of mankind; and from the humblest member, his foot, came the despised Sudra, or the servile caste. Their allotted task was to perform every kind of menial labor for their nobler-born brethren, both at home and in the field.

The Sudras constitute by far the greatest number of the inhabitants of Bengal; and probably it is the same in other parts of India. For thirty centuries past have those unhappy beings groaned under the curse of the haughty Brahmin, and patiently borne the intolerable burden. "What God has appointed," say they, "we cannot alter." So holy and unchangeable is this institution of castes, in the eyes of the people, and so firm is the belief of the Hindu as to the appointment being of divine authority, that a transition from one caste to the other is absolutely impossible. A prince cannot purchase the Brahminical thread, which is the badge of their dignity, for millions. As a mouse can never be changed into an elephant, or the thorn-bush into an orange-tree, so neither can a Sudra be turned into a Brahmin. The Brahmin may sink: if he offend against his caste, his holiness will withdraw itself; he forfeits his nobility and is degraded. If he marry the

daughter of a Sudra, his progeny will be a sort of illegitimate caste. Accordingly, at the present day, Brahmins of the first, second, and third class, are met with in India. The purest and most honored are, of course, those who, both on the paternal and maternal side, have derived their descent from ancestors of pure blood.

In modern times, however, the castes have been considerably intermixed with each other. The Kshutryus were nearly extirpated, even before the country was conquered by the Mohammedans, because they resisted the dominion of the Brahmins. The Voishnus, or merchants' caste, is no longer found in Bengal, and it is believed that they have been amalgamated with, and lost among, the Sudras; while these latter have, especially in Southern India, sunk down almost to a level with the brute creation.

The laws of the Hindus are peculiarly calculated for the preservation of the power and authority of the priests. In the time when Hinduism was in its flower, the Brahmin could in no wise be touched. The prince dared not execute him, though he might have committed every possible crime. As flesh and blood are pervaded in him by divine holiness, his moral character must be judged by quite a different standard to that of the Sudra. A good action possesses with him a much higher value; and the most hideous crime loses in his case a great deal of its heinous nature. When a Brahmin robbed his Sudra brother, he had to pay a fine in money; but, when the latter was the offender, he had to be burned at the stake; and, if he took a Brahmin by his beard, the law commanded his hands to be cut off. Yea, the revenge of this hateful priest pursued the poor wretch into the other world; for, if a Sudra should meet him in an irreverential manner, he will after death become a tree; and, should he venture to cast an angry glance at him, Yama, the god of the lower regions, will tear out his eyes; or, if he beat the Brahmin but with a straw, he will in twenty transmigrations be born of impure beasts.

India is, like Italy, a paradise for priests. All the offerings which the Hindu presents to his gods fall, as a matter of course, to the Brahmin. He that feeds a number of them has the promise of all the blessedness of heaven. The dying Hindu, who leaves him in his will some of his goods and cattle, will, freed from sin, enter forthwith into Shiva's heaven. He who sells his cow will go to hell; but, if he make it over to a Brahmin, he will go to heaven. He who presents him an umbrella will be protected against the injurious influence of the sun; if

any one will give him a pair of shoes, his feet will not be blistered on a journey; and if a person honor him with gifts of aromatic spices, he will be preserved from offensive smells and exhalations all his days.

The husbandman may not cultivate his field, — he may not put the sickle into the ripe corn, — without first giving the Brahmin his due. He is the first at court, and in attendance on the Rajah. In the most fertile parts of the country, in towns and villages, where the inhabitants are in comfortable circumstances, Brahmins are found in the greatest numbers. In the western parts of Bengal, where forests abound, and where the ground is less productive, they are but rarely seen; they "love to eat the fat, and drink the sweet," and have taken good care to obtain both for their portion.

SPECIMENS OF THE SHASTERS.

From the Shiva Puran, Part II.

SUTA'S NARRATIVE.

"Hear, O Rishi! * a most excellent and sin-destroying narrative, which I will relate as I heard it with other Rishis from Vyasa. Formerly there was a famous Rishi, named *Gautama*, and his virtuous wife was named *Ahalya;* with her he performed, during a thousand years, a rigorous *tapas* † in the southern country, near the mountain Brahmadri. At this time a drought had desolated the country, and neither moisture nor rain had the earth experienced for a hundred years; water there was not; and ascetics, men, birds, and beasts, died every where. On beholding this lamentable state, Gautama, having reflected, performed for six months the severest mortifications in honor of Varuna; at the termination of which the god appeared to him and thus said: 'I am propitiated by thee, O holy devotee! Demand whatever boon thou wishest, and I will grant it.' Gautama then requested rain; but Varuna replied, 'How can I transgress the divine command? Ask some other boon, which it may be

* Saint.

† A *tapas* is a course of severe penance, either to propitiate a divinity or for other purposes, and the advantage derived from it is always superhuman.

in my power to bestow upon thee.' On hearing this, Gautama said, 'O god! if thou art pleased with me, and willing to grant me a favor, I will request that which thou canst easily perform: cause, then, to appear a hermitage which shall surpass all others in beauty, and shaded from the sun by fragrant and fruit-bearing trees, where men and women by holy meditation shall be liberated from pain, sorrow, and anxiety; and also, as thou art the lord of water, let it enjoy a perennial fountain.' Varuna replied, 'So be it;' and then, causing a pit to be filled with water, he thus said: 'This water shall remain unexhausted, and thy name shall become celebrated by this reservoir becoming a place of pilgrimage.' Having thus spoken, Varuna disappeared. In this manner did Gautama obtain water, with which he performed in due manner the daily ceremonies. He sowed, also, rice for holy offerings, and watered it from this inexhaustible fountain; and grain of various kinds, trees, flowers, and fruits adorned his hermitage. Thus the grove of Gautama became the loveliest on the terrestrial orb; and there resorted ascetics, birds, and beasts, to live in happiness; and there, likewise, holy men fixed their abode with their sons and disciples. In this grove none knew sorrow, and gladness alone prevailed. But listen to what afterwards happened.

"On one day Gautama had sent his disciples to bring water; but, when they approached the fountain, some Brahmin women who were there prevented them, and scoffingly called out, 'We are the wives of holy anchorets; after we have filled our pitchers, you may then draw water.' The disciples returned, and mentioned this circumstance to the wife of Gautama; and Ahalya, having consoled them, proceeded herself to the fountain, and, having drawn water, brought it to her husband. Thus she did daily; and the other Brahmin women not only scoffed her, but at length went, and thus each falsely addressed her husband: 'My lord! Ahalya daily taunts me and the other Brahmin women, and I have no other resource than thee. Violence, falsehood, deceit, foolishness, covetousness, and inconsiderateness, are the innate vices of women; and, alas! of what avail will holy meditation be to me if I suffer every day the reproaches of Ahalya?' Each husband, having heard these words, revolved them in his mind, and thought that they could not be true, and that they would be guilty of ingratitude if they noticed them. But their wicked wives every day reproached them for not affording them redress; and at length, one day, as

they were passing through the grove, they overheard their wives making the same complaints to Gautama, and therefore believed that what they had said was true. The devotees, having then assembled together, began to consult respecting the manner in which they might resent this injury, so that their revenge might not appear to proceed from them; and, after deliberation, determined on invoking the assistance of Ganesha. They then propitiated him with offerings of durwa, lotoses, and rice; of vermilion, sandal-wood, and incense; of rice-milk, cakes, and sweetmeats; and with prostrations, prayers, and burnt-offerings. Well pleased, the god appeared and thus spoke: 'I am propitiated: say, what boon do you desire?' They replied, 'If thou art willing to grant us a favor, contrive to remove Gautama from his hermitage; for, if we adopt any means for that purpose, we shall expose ourselves to censure.' Ganesha answered, 'To injure or destroy a man who is free from blame is not just; and to return evil for good will be productive of sorrow, and not of benefit. Whoever performs holy meditation will obtain the happiest result; but the injuring of another will destroy the advantages which would be derived from it. Gautama has given you gold, and you wish to return glass; but that which is right ought to be performed.' Having heard these words, the devotees, from mental delusion, thus replied: 'O lord! we entreat thee to do what we have requested, as we desire no other favor.' Ganesha then said, 'Good cannot produce evil, nor evil good: from its very essence, evil must produce misery, and good happiness. Gautama will enjoy happiness from his holy meditation; but sorrow alone can result from your present wish. But you are deluded by female fascination, and you cannot, therefore, discriminate between good and evil. I will, however, comply with your request; though you will undoubtedly hereafter regret having made it.' Having thus spoken, Ganesha disappeared.

"Gautama, unacquainted with the evil intentions of the devotees, joyfully performed each day the sacred ceremonies; but one day, being in a field of rice and barley, Ganapati, having assumed the form of an extremely debilitated cow, appeared there trembling, and scarcely able to move, and began to eat the rice and barley. Observing this, the compassionate Gautama lifted a stalk of grass and struck the cow with it, in order to drive her away; but scarcely was she touched with the stalk when she dropped on the ground, and immediately died, while all the devotees beheld what passed with looks of distress. The

holy men and their lovely wives then exclaimed, 'O Gautama! what hast thou done?' Gautama, also, in amazement, thus addressed Ahalya: 'What an accident! How can I have incurred the anger of the gods? what shall I do? where shall I go? thus involved in the guilt of the murder of a cow!' The devotees at the same time thus reproached him: 'Alas! O holy Rishi! of what avail has been thy knowledge? Alas! of what avail thy burnt-offering and thy strict performance of every ceremony?' In the same manner, their wives thus reproached the wife of Gautama: 'Alas! Ahalya, of what avail have been thy wisdom, and the universal respect shown to thee? Alas! of what avail thy virtue and piety?' Thus they reviled Gautama and his wife, and then exclaimed to each other, 'Let us not look on the face of this slayer of a cow: whoever looks on his countenance will become equally guilty; and whoever approaches his hermitage, that man's offerings neither will fire nor the manes receive.' Thus reviling Gautama, they all threw stones at him. Gautama then exclaimed, 'Alas! alas! what shall I do? I swear, O holy men! that I will depart from this place.' Having thus spoken, he removed to a distant spot, and there erected a hermitage; but as long as this sin, falsely imputed to him, remained unexpiated, he could perform no holy ceremony, and his wife continued exposed to the insults of the other Brahmin women; and thus Gautama suffered the greatest misery. At length, after a short time, Gautama assembled the holy men, and thus addressed them: 'Have compassion on me, and acquaint me with the ceremonies by which my sin may be expiated; for without instruction no good act can be effected.' The Brahmins then consulted together respecting the penance which ought to be prescribed, while Gautama stood at a distance in an humble posture; and, after deliberation, they thus said: 'Sin can never be expiated except by suitable purification; for this purpose, therefore, do thou circumambulate the whole earth, and, on returning here, circumambulate a hundred times the mountain of Brahma, and thus thou wilt be purified; or make ablutions in the Ganges, and on its banks, having made ten millions of earthen lingams, worship the god whose symbol is the lingam, and then perambulate the sacred mountain and bathe in the hundred holy pools. By these means thy sin will be expiated.' Having heard these words, Gautama first circumambulated the holy mountain; and afterwards, as directed, formed the earthen lingams, in order that he might be restored to his pristine purity. He then, with

Ahalya, and his disciples, worshipped Shiva with the holiest rites and most intense devotion. At length the lord of the mountain-born goddess descended from the summit of Kailasa and thus addressed him: 'Say, what boon dost thou desire?' On beholding that form divine, a sight of which is so difficult to be obtained, Gautama was filled with delight, and, having reverenced the mighty god with laudatory strains, requested that he would liberate him from the guilt that he had incurred. Shiva

Gautama, or Budh.

replied, 'Happy art thou, O mighty Rishi! and the fruit of all thy pious acts hast thou obtained, for thou art free from sin. Thou hast been deceived by these wicked men, for even the three worlds become purified by thy presence. How, then, canst thou be polluted by an act committed by these evil-minded men,

and who will suffer for it hereafter?' Shankara * then explained to him all their wickedness and ingratitude, and Gautama listened with astonishment; and after Shankara had ceased speaking, he thus said: 'These Brahmins have done me the greatest favor, for, if it had not been for their act, I should not have enjoyed the felicity of beholding thee, O lord!' Pleased with these words, Shiva again expressed his satisfaction with the piety and devotion of Gautama, and desired him to ask a boon. Gautama replied that all he entreated was, that the Ganga [the River Ganges] might there appear, in order that he might purify himself in it. With this request Shiva complied; and the consequence was the establishment of the sacred place of pilgrimage at Trimbucka, on the Godavery."

Gautama is the principal divinity of the Burmese. According to tradition, he was so offended with the Brahmins that he determined to separate himself from them and establish a new religion.

From the Matsya Puran.

A DELUGE.

Suta, addressing the Sages: — "Formerly, there was a king named Manu, distinguished by every virtue; who, having resigned his kingdom to his son, withdrew to a certain spot, and there, indifferent to pain and pleasure, performed the severest devotional penance for a hundred thousand years. At length Brahma appeared to him and said, 'Choose whatever boon thy mind desires.' The king, bowing to Brahma, thus replied: 'From thee one most excellent boon I crave; and wish that, when the *pralaya* takes place, I may be preserved from that destruction in which all things movable and immovable shall be involved.' 'So be it,' Brahma replied, and then disappeared; and the angels rained on the king from heaven a shower of flowers.

"Some time after, as near his hermitage he was offering water to the *manes*, a small fish came into his hands along with the water; and the compassionate king, in order to preserve it, placed it in a small vessel. But in one night it increased sixteen inches in size, and exclaimed, 'Save me! save me!' The king

* *Shankara* is another name for Shiva. Some of the Hindu divinities have many names, and they are used interchangeably, to prevent repetition.

then successively threw it in a jar, a well, a lake, and a river; but, in each night, the fish grew larger, and entreated a more roomy place of abode. At length the king threw it into the sea, when it immediately occupied with its bulk the whole ocean. Manu, then alarmed, exclaimed, 'What god art thou? or canst thou be any other than Vasudeva, whose form has thus expanded to such immensity? I know thee now; but why hast thou thus pained me, by assuming the form of a fish, O Keshava! Praise be to thee, O Vishnu, lord of the universe!' The lord replied, 'Excellent! excellent! Thou hast discovered the truth, O sinless one! Know that in a short time this earth shall be submerged in water, and that this ship has been prepared by all the gods for thy preservation. When, therefore, the deluge takes place, enter this ship, and take with thee all kinds of seeds, and of animals that are produced from heat, from eggs, or from the womb; and fasten it to this horn of mine. Thus shalt thou be preserved, and after the deluge has ceased, shalt thou become, on the renovation of the world, the progenitor of all beings; and thus shall a holy devotee, steadfast in ascetic practices, and completely conversant in divine knowledge, become, at the beginning of the Krita Yug, the lord of a manwantara.' Having thus spoken, the lord disappeared, and Manu continued his devotions to Vasudeva until the deluge took place, as foretold by Vishnu; and then Janardana appeared in the form of a horned fish; and, while the ship into which Manu had entered was attached to its horn, Vishnu, under the form of this fish, in answer to the questions of Manu, revealed unto him the Matsya Puran."

From the Bhagawat, Book III. Chap. 13.

THE EARTH RAISED FROM THE WATERS OF A DELUGE.

"Parameshti, then, beholding the earth sunk amidst the waters, long meditated on the means by which it might be replaced in its former situation. 'Whose divine aid,' he thought, 'shall I implore to upraise from the deep abyss that earth which I formerly created? That lord from whose heart I sprang can alone effect this mighty work.' As Brahma thus resolved, suddenly from his nostrils sprang a young boar, no larger than the thumb; but, as he viewed it, in an instant it wonderfully increased to the size of a mighty elephant. The Rishis Prajapatis, Rumaras, and Manu, beholding the boar-like form in astonishment, thus in their minds conjectured: 'What can be this delu-

sive form of a boar, since, in reality, it must be of a divine nature? How wonderful that it should spring from Brahma's nostrils no larger than the top of the thumb, and, in an instant, become equal to a mighty mountain! Can it be that mighty lord, on whom we meditate with minds devout?' While thus they thought, that lord, who was the primeval victim, emitted a sound loud as thunder, and, as the eight regions reëchoed the sound, Brahma and his sons were delighted; for they hence knew the lord, and, their anxiety being dissipated, the pure inhabitants of Janalok, Tapalok, and Satyalok, united in addressing to him their holy praise. Pleased with these praises, the wondrous boar displayed himself like a vast mountain, with tail erect, mane waving, his bristles sharp as lances, and hoofs striking the sky, and snuffing, in imitation of a boar, to discover the earth. Then he of the terrible tusk, with terror-divested eyes regarding those who were adoring him, like a sportive elephant dived into the abyss of waters; and the waters being divided, as if a thunderbolt vast as a mountain had fallen precipitately into them, resounded like the thunder; and, raising in pain its wide billows, the abyss profound exclaimed, 'Save me, O lord of sacrifice!' Thus, subduing the waters with his sharp hoofs, he reached their utmost extremity, and saw lying there the earth, which he had originally intended for the abode of souls. Having then slain the demon Hiranyaksha, he uplifted it on his tusks from the dark abyss, and Brahma and his sons extolled his wondrous power."

From the Padma Puran, Chap. 5.

DAKSHA'S SACRIFICE.

Pulastya, addressing Bhishma: — "Formerly, O Bhishma! Daksha prepared a sacrifice at Gungadwara, to which came all the immortals and divine sages. At this festival celestial viands abounded. The consecrated place of sacrifice extended for several yojanas. Numerous altars were erected. The sacred rites and ceremonies were duly performed by Vasishta, Angiras, Vrihaspati, and Narada; and Vishnu protected the sacrifice. But Sati thus addressed her father: 'My lord! all the immortals, the divine sages, and my sisters with their husbands, adorned in the costliest manner, have honored this festival with their presence; and I observe that not a single one has been uninvited except my husband. But, unless he attend, empty will be all these rites, and

productive of no advantage. Say, then, has it been through forgetfulness that thou didst not invite my lord?' On hearing these words, Daksha, with parental affection, placed his youthful daughter, who showed such fondness for her husband, in his lap, and thus replied: 'Listen, my darling! while I explain the reason why thy husband has not been invited. It is because that he is the bearer of a human skull, a delighter in cemeteries, accompanied by ghosts and goblins, naked or merely clothed with a tiger's or elephant's skin, covered with ashes, wearing a necklace of human skulls, ornamented with serpents, always wandering about as a mendicant, sometimes dancing and sometimes singing, and neglecting all divine ordinances. Such evil practices, my darling! render thy husband the shame of the three worlds, and unworthy to be admitted at a sacrifice where Brahma, Vishnu, and all the immortals and divine sages, are present.' He ceased, and Sati, incensed by his words, with anger-inflamed eyes thus spoke: 'That god is the lord of the universe, from whom all things and beings have received their rank and station, and whose supreme excellence no tongue is able to declare; and, though delighting in cemeteries, covered with ashes, and adorned with human bones and serpents, he is the creator, the provider, and the preserver. It was alone through the favor of Rudra [Shiva] that Indra obtained heaven; through the will, also, of Rudra, Brahma creates; and, were it not for Rudra, how could Vishnu have the power to preserve? If, therefore, I have derived might from my devotion, and if I be beloved by Rudra, since thou hast despised him, this sacrifice shall be undoubtedly destroyed.' Having thus spoken, Sati fixed her mind in profound abstraction, and by her own splendor consumed her body, while all the immortals exclaimed in astonishment, 'How wonderful!' On being informed of this event, Shiva, much afflicted, collected myriads of ghosts, goblins, and demons, and hastened to Daksha's place of sacrifice; which he completely destroyed, after having vanquished all the immortals that opposed him."

From the Skanda Puran, the Chapter entitled "Kapardi Mahatmyam."

GANESA CREATED.

Shiva, addressing Parvati: — "Formerly, during the twilight that intervened between the Dwapara and Kali Yugs, women,

barbarians, Sudras, and other workers of sin, obtained entrance into heaven by visiting the celebrated temple of Someshwara. Sacrifices, ascetic practices, charitable gifts, and all the other prescribed ordinances ceased, and men thronged only to the temple of Shiva. Hence old and young, the skilled in the Vedas and those ignorant of them, and even women and Sudras, ascended to heaven, until at length it became crowded to excess. Then Indra and the gods, afflicted at being thus overcome by men, sought the protection of Shiva, and thus with reverence addressed him: 'O Shankara! by thy favor heaven is pervaded by men, and we are nearly expelled from it. These mortals wander wherever they please, exclaiming, "I am the greatest! I am the greatest!" and Dharma Rajah, beholding the register of their good and evil deeds, remains silent, lost in astonishment. For the seven hells were most assuredly intended for their reception; but, having visited thy shrine, their sins have been remitted, and they have obtained a most excellent futurity.' Shiva replied, 'Such was my promise to Soma, nor can it be infringed; and all men, therefore, who visit the temple of Someshwara must ascend to heaven. But supplicate Parvati, and she will contrive some means for extricating you from this distress.' The gods then kneeling before Parvati, with folded hands and bended heads, thus invoked her assistance with laudatory strains: 'Praise be to thee, O supreme of goddesses, supporter of the universe! Praise be to thee, O lotos-eyed, resplendent as gold! Praise be to thee, O beloved of Shiva, who createst and destroyest! Praise be to thee, O mountain-born! Praise be to thee, O Kalarattri, O Durga, who pervadest the universe, and art the sole substance from which all female forms, whether mortal or immortal, originate! Grant us thy aid, and save us from this fearful distress!' Having heard the supplication of Indra and the gods, thou, O goddess! wert moved with compassion, and, gently rubbing thy body, there was thence produced a wondrous being with four arms and the head of an elephant; when thou thus addressedst the gods: 'Desirous of your advantage have I created this being, who will occasion obstacles to men, and, deluding them, will deprive them of the wish to visit Somanatha, and thus shall they fall into hell.' This heard, the gods

Ganesa.

were delighted, and returned to their own abodes, relieved from all fear of mankind."

From the Lainga Puran, Part II., Chap. 100.

KALI CREATED.

Suta thus spoke: — "Formerly a female Asura,* named Daruka, had through devotion obtained such power, that she consumed like fire the gods and Brahmins. But, as she was attended by a numerous host of female Asuras, Vishnu, and all the gods, were afraid to engage in battle with her, lest they should incur the sin of *feminicide.* They in consequence proceeded to Shiva, and with laudatory strains entreated his assistance; and he then, regarding Devi, thus addressed her: 'Let me request, O lovely one! that thou wouldst now, for the benefit of the universe, effect the destruction of this Daruka.' Having heard these words, Parvati created from her own substance a maiden of black color, with matted locks, with an eye in her forehead, bearing in her hands a trident and a skull, of aspect terrible to behold, and arrayed in celestial garments and adorned with all kinds of ornaments. On beholding this terrific form of darkness, the gods retreated in alarm. Parvati then created innumerable ghosts, goblins, and demons; and, attended by these, Kali in obedience to her order, attacked and destroyed Daruka, and removed the distress of the world."

This legend concludes in the following singular manner: "Shiva also appeared as an infant in a cemetery surrounded by ghosts, and on beholding him Kali took him up, and, caressing him, gave him her breast. He sucked the nectareous fluid; but becoming angry, in order to divert and pacify him, Kali, clasping him to her bosom, danced with her attendant goblins and demons amongst the dead until he was pleased and delighted; while Vishnu, Brahma, Indra, and all the gods, bowing themselves, praised with laudatory strains the god of gods, Parvati and Kali."

From the Garura Puran.

INVOCATION TO DURGA, OR KALI.

"On the ninth of each half month invoke Durga with these words: '*Hrim, protect me, O Durga! O chief of the divine mothers! giver of blessings! accept these various offerings of flesh and my prayers.*' On the third, also, of Margashirsha commence

* Demon.

the worship of Durga before her image having eighteen hands, and holding in them a mace, a bell, a looking-glass, an iron rod, a bow, a banner, a small drum, a battle-axe, a noose, a lance, a club, a trident, a disk, a shield, an *ankush*, a dart, a thunderbolt, and a skull; and address to her the following hymn: 'Om, praise be to thee, O Bhagawati, Chamunda! dweller in cemeteries, bearer of a skull, borne on a car drawn by ghosts, Kalarattri, large-mouthed, many-armed, sounding thy bell and drum, laughing terribly, gnashing thy horrid teeth loudly, clothed in an elephant's skin, with a body full of flesh and blood, and a tremendous tongue! Praise be to thee, O Kali! with terrific tusks and fear-inspiring eyes flashing like lightning, with a countenance dark with frowns, bearing the moon on thy matted locks, and on thy neck a string of skulls! *Hram*, *Hram*, O destroyer of difficulties! quickly accomplish this business! O delighter in flesh and blood! be propitious, be propitious, and enter this place! Enter, enter! tread, tread! dance, dance! Why delayest thou to enter? O wearer of human heads and skulls! seize, seize! tear, tear! consume, consume! slay, slay! *Hrum*, *Hrum*, destroy, destroy! pierce, pierce with thy trident! kill, kill with thy thunderbolt! smite, smite with thy rod! cut off, cut off with thy disk! fell, fell with thy mace! strike, strike with thy axe! Come, come, O Maheshwari! come, O Kamarini! come, O Varahi! come, O Aindri! come, O Chamunda! come, O Kapalini! come, O Mahakali! come, O frequenter of Kailasa! enter, enter this place, O thou who executest the wrath of Rudra, and causest the destruction of the Asuras!'"

The Introduction or Dedication of the Mahabarat.

A HYMN OF PRAISE TO DURGA.

Hail, greatest of goddesses, victory unto thee,
Victory unto thee, Hurree Chandee!
In thy forehead thy red mark appeared so glowing,
O Dabee! we tremble to see thee.
At thy ears hang the gold rings so large and so brilliant;
At thy nose is the rich gapamatee;*
Thy hands hold the cleaver, and trident, and blood-dish —
So dreadful appears Bhagabattee!
Sixty-four times ten millions of witches and spectres,
Thee their patroness and mistress attending.
Thou art Loksmee, the primeval mother of all things,
In creation we see thee extending.

* Jewel.

In each house dost thou enter, on *holiness* thinking;
There to dwell with the pure thou art wont.
Fifteen million times than a warrior stronger,
Thine arm Moyassoor did slay;
Thy sword Roktabija, the dread demon, laid low,
And the fear of the gods did allay.
The wife of Eswara, a strange, fearful demon,
A ghost and the mother of all.
Nineteen millions of devils, all females and fearful,
From thy body came forth at thy call.
With round eyes and flat forehead thou starest portentious,
And utterest thy dread voice in thunder.
With thy cleaver and blood-dish and bloody tongue quivering,
Thou enterest graveyards, devouring choice corpses,
Still with battle-field slaughter unfilled.
How sweet is the blood of the good man unto thee!
Still his gore from thy mouth is distilled.
Thou rejoicest to hear the dread battle's loud slaughter,
The sound of the Ra! Ra! so dire.
The chief of the holy, thy names, lady, are many,
At the cry of Ra! Ra! swiftly flying.
Nine hundred times counted, one thousand of witches,
Of ghosts and of devils obey thee.
In the silence of midnight, when dark, are thy witches
A corpse for a vehicle using,
When the fresh dead are lying, thou a feast gladly makest,
With the green skulls thy fancy amusing.
When the flames of the funeral gleam through the night's darkness,
When the dead they are wont to consume,
How swiftly thou runnest to snuff the rich odors!
To thee they are richest perfume.
To thy timbrel's jingle, in the air ever sounding,
Ghosts and devils innumerable dance;
They share in thy honors and share in thy worship,
As thy name and thy praise they advance.
Thou art greater than Brahma, or Vishnu, or Shiva
Thou art called the great Bhagabattee.

Translated by Rev. Charles Lacey, for Caleb Wright.

From the Matsya Puran, Chap. 3, 4.

BRAHMA'S INCEST.

"Brahma next formed from his own immaculate substance a female, who is celebrated under the names of *Shatarupa*, *Savitri*, *Sarasvati*, *Gayatri*, and *Brahmani*. Then, beholding his daughter, born from his own body, Brahma became wounded with the arrows of love, and exclaimed, 'How surpassing lovely she is!' But Shatarupa turned to the right side from his gaze, and, as Brahma wished to look after her, a second head appeared;

and thus, as she passed, in order to avoid his amorous glances, to his left and his rear, two other heads successively manifested themselves. At length she sprang into the sky, and, as Brahma was anxious to gaze after her, a fifth head was immediately formed. Then Brahma thus called to his daughter: 'Let us generate all kinds of animated beings, men, Suras, and Asuras.'* On hearing these words she descended; and, Brahma having espoused her, they withdrew into a secluded spot, and there indulged in the delights of love for one hundred divine years."

From the Vamana Puran, Chap. 6.

"Then Hara, wounded by the arrows of Kama, [the god of love,] wandered into a deep forest, named *Daruvanam*, where holy sages and their wives resided. The sages, on beholding Shiva, saluted him with bended heads, and he, wearied, said to them, 'Give me alms.' Thus he went begging round the different hermitages; and, wherever he came, the minds of the sages' wives, on seeing him, became disturbed and agitated with the pain of love, and all commenced to follow him. But, when the sages saw their holy dwellings thus deserted, they exclaimed, *'May the lingam of this man† fall to the ground!'* That instant the lingam of Shiva fell to the ground; and the god immediately disappeared. The lingam, then, as it fell, penetrated through the lower worlds, and increased in height until its top towered above the heavens. The earth quaked, and all things movable and immovable were agitated; on perceiving which, Brahma hastened to the Sea of Milk, and said to Vishnu, 'Say, why does the universe thus tremble?' Hari replied, 'On account of the falling of Shiva's lingam, in consequence of the curse of the holy and divine sages.' On hearing of this most wonderful event, Brahma said, 'Let us go and behold this lingam.' The two gods then repaired to Daruvanam; and, on beholding it without beginning or end, Vishnu mounted the king of birds and descended into the lower regions in order to ascertain its base; and, for the purpose of discovering its top, Brahma in a lotos car ascended the heavens. But they returned from their search wearied and disappointed, and together approaching the lingam, with due reverence and praises, entreated

* Suras are gods, and Asuras are demons.

† Shiva was disguised, and the sages, therefore, did not know him.

Shiva to resume his lingam. Thus propitiated, that god appeared in his own form, and said, 'If gods and men will worship * my lingam, I will resume it; but not otherwise.' To this proposal Vishnu, Brahma, and the gods, assented." †

From the Bhagavat Geeta, p. 90.

PART OF ARJOON'S DESCRIPTION OF KRISHNA, WHOM HE SAW IN A VISION.

"The winds, alike with me, are terrified to behold thy wondrous form gigantic; with many mouths and eyes; with many arms, and legs, and breasts; with many bellies, and with rows of dreadful teeth! Thus, as I see thee, touching the heavens, and shining with such glory, of such various hues, with widely-opened mouths, and bright, expanded eyes, I am disturbed within me; my resolution faileth me, O Vishnu! and I find no rest! Having beholden thy dreadful teeth, and gazed on thy countenance, — emblem of time's last fire, — I know not which way to turn! I find no peace! Have mercy, then, O god of gods! thou mansion of the universe! The sons of Dhreetarashtra now, with all those rulers of the land, Bhéeshma, Drona, the son of Soot, and even the fronts of our army, seem to be precipitating themselves hastily into thy mouth, discovering such frightful rows of teeth! whilst some appear to stick between thy teeth with their bodies sorely mangled. As the rapid streams of full-flowing rivers roll on to meet the ocean's bed, even so these heroes of the human race rush on towards thy flaming mouths. As troops of insects, with

* It is now the principal object of worship in more than half of the temples of India.

† "The lingam is formed of stone, and consists of a base three or four feet high, the top of which is surrounded by a raised rim; and in the middle is slightly excavated, and raised on a level with the rim, the figure of a yoni, (*pudendum muliebre*,) from the centre of which rises a smooth, round stone, slightly conical towards the top, of a foot and a half in height and about three inches diameter at the base. Major Moor has, therefore, very justly observed, 'It is some comparative and negative praise to the Hindus, that the emblems under which they exhibit the elements and operations of nature are not externally indecorous. Unlike the abominable realities of Egypt and Greece, we see the phallic emblem in the Hindu Pantheon without offence; and know not, until the information be extorted, that we are contemplating a symbol whose prototype is indelicate. The plates of my book may be turned and examined, over and over, and the uninformed observer will not be aware that in several of them he has viewed the typical representation of the generative organs or powers of humanity.'" — *Ancient and Hindu Mythology, by Col. Kennedy*, pp. 103, 104.

increasing speed, seek their own destruction in the flaming fire, even so these people, with swelling fury, seek their own destruction. Thou involvest and swallowest them altogether, even unto the last, with thy flaming mouths, whilst the whole is filled with thy glory, as thy awful beams, O Vishnu, shine forth on all sides!"

THE MOON PLANT SACRIFICE.

The moon-plant must be collected in a moonlight night, from the table-land on the top of a mountain, and carted to the place of sacrifice by two rams or he-goats. The juice of the plant, mixed with barley and other ingredients, becomes, by fermentation, a very intoxicating liquor. The officiating Brahmins are to drink this liquor as a part of the performance. The sacrifice continues several weeks, and is accompanied by numerous austerities which endanger the lives of the worshippers.

Tuka Rama, a sage who flourished about three hundred years ago, speaks of muzzling the animals used in carting the moon-plant, and of beating them to death by the fists of the Brahmins. His verses are to the following effect: —

"Beat to death the ram you've muzzled,
And offer the Soma with sacred song: —
So they say; but yet I'm puzzled,
And half suspect such worship wrong;
For rites like these are at best but scurvy,
That turn religion topsy-turvy."

In the Sama Veda, there is a series of about a thousand verses, designed to be chanted or sung at the moon-plant sacrifice. The following extracts will serve as specimens. Each paragraph, the last one excepted, contains an entire verse.

"O Agni! whether I now speak with true intonations or with false, I mean to praise thee. Come hither, therefore, and grow great by drinking this moon-plant juice."

"O Indra! drinker of the moon-plant juice, these thy friends [the attendant priests] look on thee, with the affection that the cattle-feeder looks on his cattle."

"We call on thee, the performer of meritorious acts, day by day, as men call on the cow to the milking."

"Let these moon-plants fill thee with delight, O holder of the thunderbolt! Do thou procure for us wealth, and, at the same time, kill outright all who hate the Brahmins."

"O Indra! wherever — whether in some strong chest or in some hill or well — treasure worthy of regard is laid up, thence do thou bring it to us."

"O Indra! this morning accept our sacrifice, accompanied with rice, curds, sweet cakes, and praises."

"Come into our presence to partake of the moon-plant juice and other viands. Do not get angry with us, [but bear with us] as an elderly man does with a young wife."

"We, who are eager for the possession of riches, take hold of thy right hand, O Indra, lord of wealth! We know thee, O mighty god! to be lord of cattle; give us then that wealth which consists in cows that yield large supplies of milk."

"O worthy of all praise! let our eucharistic songs fix thee, as firmly as the charioteer is fixed in his seat, and let their symphony sound before thee like the lowing of newly-calved cows for their calves."

"When, O Indra! those who come to worship invoke thee, and delight thee with sacrificial viands, and ceremonies used for the obtaining victory over our enemies, then do thou yoke thy banquet-going horses, and having slain some one, and seized his wealth, bestow it on us."

"Bestow on us a good and auspicious intellect, along with wisdom and food, that we may secure thy friendship; and do thou delight in our spirituous liquors as cows do in rich pasturage."

"He who causes the well-filled golden-colored horses' graindish to glisten, is the man who will stand in the first place before thy rain-causing, cow-conferring chariot. O Indra! now yoke thy horses."

"Come, O Indra! with all thy bands, like the herd of cows collected in the cow-house."

"The mountain-produced, pressed moon-plant is distilling its juice in the holy place. Thou, O Soma! art the embroiler of all things in thy drunken frolics."

"The Brahmins, void of malice, sing praises before the beloved, much-desired presence of Indra, with the affection cow-mothers lick their calves in the day they are produced."

"[O priests,] we praise all the day long that renowned, foe-destroying Indra of yours, who gets muzzy on the sacrificial beverage placed in the sacred vessels, with voices raised as loud as those of milch-cows lowing for their calves. [Indra,] we desire of thee quickly to give us food of heavenly origin, worthy of being

bestowed, encircled with majesty as a mountain with clouds, capable of feeding multitudes, worthy of being extolled, in hundreds and thousands of different kinds of measure, and, united with it, abundance of cows."

"The sweet moon-plants, when pressed, flow in a stream, and with a loud voice, for the production of inebriation. The juices flow down during the time of bruising with a noise for the glorious toper Indra, who gives its splendor to the morning."

From the Padma Puran, Chap. IX.

OCCURRENCES IN THE HEAVEN KAILASA.

Narada said: —"At this time I went and informed Jalandhara that Shambhu * had promised to effect his destruction. Jalandhara then said to me, 'O holy sage! what precious things are contained in the abode of the bearer * of the trident? Acquaint me with the whole, as war should not be unless there be booty.' I replied, 'Shambhu is old, covered with ashes, his neck marked with the poison of serpents, mounted on a bull, bearing a beggar's dish in his hand, and with an elephant-headed and a six-headed son,† and he has nothing valuable belonging to him except the lovely and full-bosomed daughter of the mountain. Inflamed with love and captivated by her beauty, Mahesha * passes his days in sport and dalliance, or sings and dances to amuse her. She is named Parvati, and far excels in loveliness either Vrinda or the nymphs of heaven.' Having thus spoken, and excited the desire of Jalandhara, I disappeared.

"After this the son of the sea despatched Rahu on an embassy to Kailasa, who arrived there in a moment; and, on beholding the resplendent abode of Shambhu, he exclaimed to himself, 'How wonderful is this place!' He then wished to enter, but was prevented by the warders, who demanded his business. Rahu replied, 'I am the ambassador of Jalandhara; but the message of a mighty king is not addressed unto a doorkeeper.' Nandi, hearing these words, hastened and informed Shiva; and, having received his commands, introduced Rahu. Having entered, he beheld Shambhu, five-faced and ten-armed, his sacrificial cord formed of a snake, and his matted locks adorned with the moon, waited upon by vile and ugly servants, but attended

* Shiva.

† Ganesa and Kartika. See the engraving of Ganesa on page 21.

by all the immortals, who, looking to the ambassador, desired him to speak. Rahu then began: 'O lord! I am sent to thee by Jalandhara: hear his auspicious words from my mouth; and do thou, who art addicted to devotion, devoid of affection, an abandoner of works, who hast neither father nor mother, nor observest the duties of the householder, obey his commands. The mighty Jalandhara enjoys the dominion of the three worlds; do thou also become subject to him. Why shouldst thou, old, libidinous, and the rider of a bull, refuse to obey him?' While Rahu thus spoke, the sons of Shiva, Ganesa and Skanda,* were rubbing his body; and, disturbed by their hands, Vasuki fell to the ground, and immediately began to swallow the rat, Ganesa's vehicle, beginning with the tail. Gananayaka,† on observing the snake about to swallow his courser, called out, 'Loose!

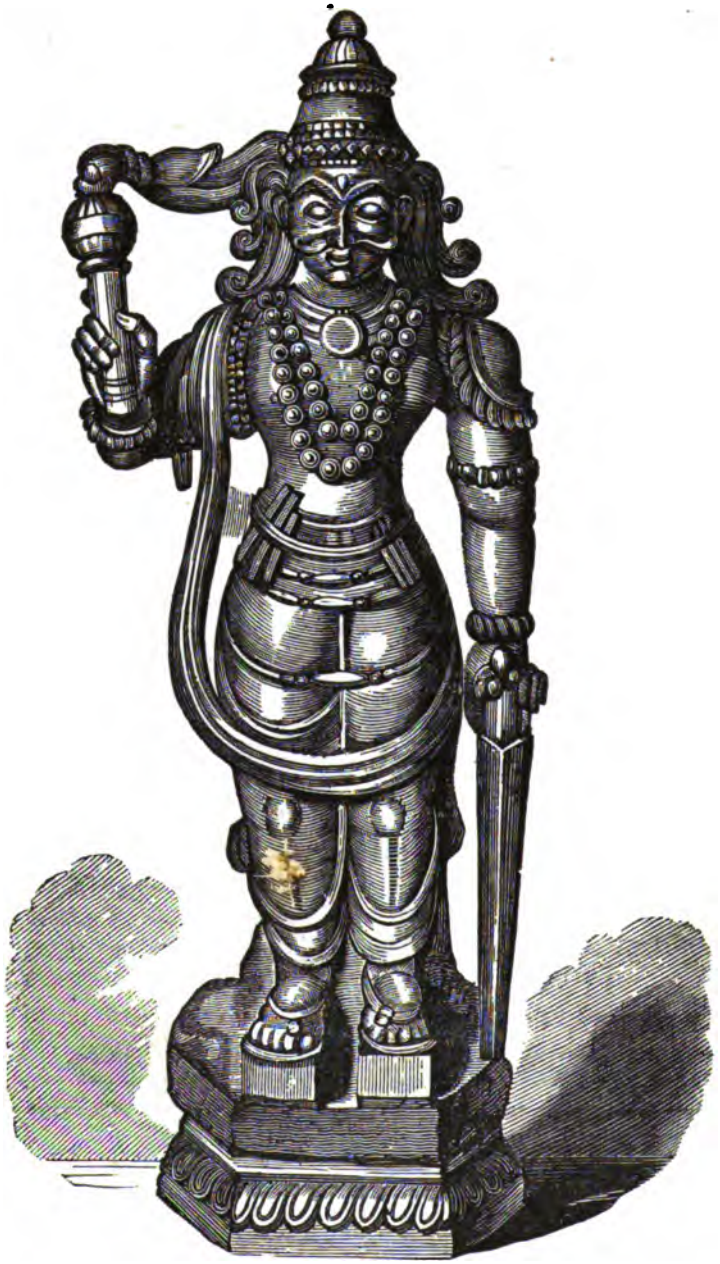
Skanda, or Kartika.

loose!' At this time Skanda's peacock began to scream in the shrillest manner; and the serpent, frightened, disgorged the rat, and hastened to replace himself on the neck of Shiva, where, violently respiring, he dimmed the brightness of the moon with his poisonous breath. Then came the beloved of Vishnu, dripping from her couch in the Milky Sea, and bearing a vase full with the beverage of immortality, with which she reanimated the head of Brahma that Shiva's hand eternally displays. The head, falling and rolling on the ground, exclaimed in boasting accents, while the spectators expressed to each other their astonishment, 'I am the first — I am the most ancient of beings — I am the creator — I am the lord of all things.' At this moment, from the matted locks of Shiva sprang myriads of beings, three-

* Kartika † Ganesa.

faced, three-footed, seven-armed, and with yellow hair hanging in long and matted locks, on seeing whom the head became mute as the dead. Having beheld these wonders, Rahu, in fear and astonishment, thus again addressed Mahesha: 'O lord! through the strength of thy devotion and abstraction, affections touch not thee; why then dost thou sacrifice to feelings and passions? Thou receivest adoration from Brahma and all other deities; but who is the god whom thou adorest? Thou art the supreme god; why, therefore, dost thou collect the scraps of the beggar? But, O chief of devotees! since thou preferrest a state of pious mortification, yield up Gauri and thy two sons, Ganesa and Skanda; and do thou, with a beggar's dish, wander from door to door.' Thus Rahu urged his request in many words; but Maheshwara returned no answer. Then Rahu, as Isha would not break silence, thus addressed Nandi: 'Thou art a minister and a general, and canst therefore inform me what means this departure from all received usages; as it is not becoming that a prince, to whom an ambassador is sent, should preserve silence.' But Nandi replied not, and immediately, on a sign from Shiva, reconducted and dismissed Rahu, who hastened to Jalandhara and related to him all that had passed."

"The mighty Jalandhara, having heard the relation of his ambassador, immediately arrayed his army and marched forward. Then the tumult of his approaching forces resounded through the inmost recesses of Mandara; and wide was it spread by the echoes of Meru, while lions started from their dens; warlike instruments with their clangor, dear to the warrior, deafened the three worlds; and, as trod the mighty Danavas, the lofty mountains trembled, and the seas were agitated. The armor of warriors clashed as on they marched, borne on various vehicles; and the wheels of the war-chariots harsh grated along the ground. White umbrellas shaded the mighty host from the sun, and fans formed of peacocks' feathers prevented heat. From the innumerable elephants, cars, horse, and foot, arose clouds of dust, which spread over the sky like the blue lotos, or the dark billows of the heaving ocean. * * * Then Nandi and Shumbha showered arrows on each other thick as the leaves are strown on Mandara when storms agitate its trees. At length Shumbha, throwing away his bow, rushed to the chariot of Nandi, and, wounding him on the breast, he fell senseless like a mountain struck by a thunderbolt."



Kannappen, a stone image, five feet and five inches in height, formerly worshipped at Amattavanakoody, in South India.

DESCRIPTION

OF TWO

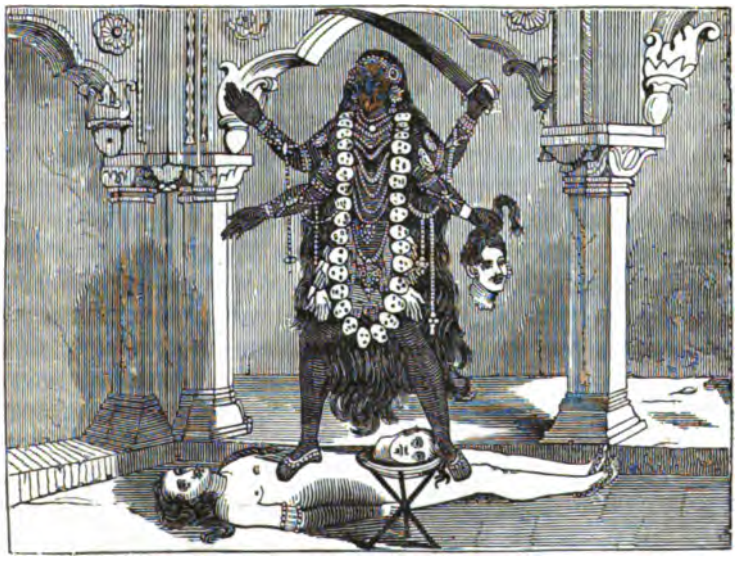
PAGAN FESTIVALS,

CELEBRATED ANNUALLY IN CALCUTTA, AT AN EXPENSE OF

THREE MILLIONS OF DOLLARS.

By Rev. ALEXANDER DUFF, D. D.,

OF CALCUTTA.



PUBLISHED BY CALEB WRIGHT,

A Palankeen Bearer of the Rowaney caste dancing about the streets in celebration of the Durga Festival. *See page* 107.

A BRIEF DESCRIPTION

OF

TWO OF THE PRINCIPAL HINDU FESTIVALS.

In India, the division of time into weeks has all along been observed. The remembrance, however, of the *seventh* as a *Sabbath*, or *sacred day of rest*, has been completely lost. Instead thereof, there have been substituted certain periodical or anniversary days of high festival, in honor of the principal divinities. These are so numerous, that it would be impossible

Shiva. *Brahma.* *Vishnoo.*

within our limits to describe them all, as the description would be exceedingly voluminous. Every sect has its own favorite tutelary deity, in honor of whom stated periodical festivals are held.

There is scarcely a day in the twelvemonth on which the anniversary of one or other of the gods is not celebrated by one or other of the leading sects, or sub-sects. It is quite enough for our purpose, to refer to one or two of those festivals which —from the superiority of the divinity adored, the prodigious multitudes that engage in the religious rites, and the universal suspension of business among all classes for several days — may strictly and truly be denominated *national*. In Bengal, in particular, the consort of Shiva, the destroying power, is the divinity that engrosses the largest proportion of daily, monthly, and annual devotion. Like the other principal deities, she has been manifested under an immense variety of forms. Of these a *thousand* are usually enumerated, under *as many* distinct appellations. Of the thousand forms, there are *two* that have risen to unrivalled preëminence above the rest. These are the forms of *Durga* and *Kali*. To these, therefore, our attention may be chiefly directed.

In the form of Durga, the consort of Shiva has been said to blend in herself the characters of the Olympian Juno and the Pallas, or armed Minerva, of the Greeks. She is, however, a far more tremendous personage than both of these combined. Having been endowed by all the gods severally with their distinctive attributes, she concentrates in herself their united power and divinity. She has thus become at once their champion and protectress. Hence her towering preëminence above them all in popular estimation; and hence, of all the annual festivals, that of Durga is most extensively celebrated in Eastern India. In this character, she is usually represented with ten arms, into which the principal gods delivered their respective weapons of warfare. From one she received the trident; from a second, a quiver and arrows; from a third, a battle-axe; from a fourth, an iron club; from a fifth, spears and thunderbolts; and so, from other gods, various other warlike instruments; together with the befitting ornaments of a golden crown, and robes magnificently adorned with jewels, and a necklace of pearls, and a wreathed circlet of snakes.

Thus martially accoutred, the belligerent goddess is ever ready to encounter the mightiest giants, and most malignant demons, that dare to invade the repose of the immortals. It was in consequence of destroying a giant, of such terrible potency as to have dispossessed the gods of their dominion, that she gained the name of Durga. As the description of this celebrated con-

test is a fair specimen of the manner in which the founders of Hinduism conceived and depicted those numberless battles of gods with which the sacred books abound, and as the reiterated rehearsal of it enters largely into all the meditations and prayers, the invocations and praise, the songs and the hymns, of millions of adoring worshippers, on days of high festival, it may be well to introduce the original account of it, though in a somewhat abridged form, from the volumes of Ward.

In remote ages, a giant named Durga, having performed religious austerities of transcendent merit, in honor of Brahma, obtained his blessing, and became a great oppressor. He conquered the three worlds; dethroned all the gods, except the sacred Triad; banished them from their respective heavens to live in forests; and compelled them, at his nod, to come and bow down and worship before him, and celebrate his praise. He abolished all religious ceremonies. The Brahmans, through fear of him, forsook the reading of the Vedas. The rivers changed their courses. Fire lost its energy. The terrified stars retired from his sight. He assumed the forms of the clouds, and gave rain whenever he pleased; the earth, through fear, gave an abundant increase; and the trees yielded flowers and fruits out of season. The gods at length applied to Shiva. One said, He has dethroned me; another, He has taken my kingdom; and thus all the gods related their misfortunes. Shiva, pitying their case, desired his wife, Parvati, to go and destroy the giant. She willingly accepted the commission. Durga prepared to meet her with an army of thirty thousand giants, who were such monsters in size, that they covered the surface of the earth, — ten millions of swift-footed horses, — a hundred millions of chariots, — a hundred and twenty thousand millions of elephants, — and soldiers beyond the power of arithmetic to number. Parvati, having assumed a thousand arms, sat down upon a mountain, coolly awaiting the approach of her formidable foes. The troops of the giant poured their arrows at her, thick as the drops of rain in a storm; they even tore up the trees and the mountains, and hurled them at the goddess: she turned them all away, and caused millions of strange beings to issue from her body, which devoured all her enemies except their great leader. He then hurled a flaming dart at the goddess; she easily turned it aside. He discharged another; this she resisted by a hundred arrows. He levelled at her a club and pike; these, too, she repelled. He broke off the peak of a moun-

tain, and threw it at her; she cut it into seven pieces by her spear. He now assumed the shape of an elephant as large as a mountain, and approached the goddess; but she tied his legs, and with her nails, which were like cimeters, tore him to pieces. He then arose in the form of a buffalo, and with his horns cast stones and mountains at the goddess, tearing up the trees by the breath of his nostrils; she pierced him with a trident, when he reeled to and fro. Renouncing the form of a buffalo, he reassumed his original body as a giant, with a thousand arms, and weapons in each; she seized him by his thousand arms and carried him into the air, from whence she threw him down with a dreadful force. Perceiving, however, that this had no effect, she pierced him in the breast with an arrow; when the blood issued in streams from his mouth, and he expired. The gods, filled with joy, immediately reascended their thrones, and were reinstated in their former splendor. The Brahmans recommenced the study of the Vedas. Sacrifices were again regularly performed. Every thing reassumed its pristine state. The heavens rang with the praises of Parvati; and the gods, in return for so signal a deliverance, immortalized the victory by transferring to the heroine the name of Durga.

Suppose, then, you were in Calcutta in the month of September, you might every where witness the most splendid and extensive preparations for the annual festival of Durga. In going along the streets of the native city, your eye might be chiefly arrested by the profusion of images unceremoniously exposed to sale like the commonest commodity. On inquiry, you are told that wealthy natives have images of the goddess in their houses, made of gold, silver, brass, copper, crystal, stone, or mixed metal, which are *daily worshipped.* These are stable and permanent heir-looms in a family; and are transmitted from sire to son, like any other of the goods and chattels that become hereditary property. But, besides these, you are next informed that, for the ceremonial purpose of a great festival, multitudes of *temporary* images are prepared. The reason why we call these temporary will appear by and by. These may be made of a composition of hay, sticks, clay, wood, or other cheap and light materials. They may be made of any size, from a few inches to ten, twelve, or twenty feet in height. But the ordinary size is that of the human stature. The only limitation is that of the form. This is prescribed by divine authority; and from it there must be no departure. Hence all are framed or fashioned

after the same divine model. This, we may remark in passing, is one of the principal reasons why, in India, the arts of painting and statuary have for ages been stationary. These images may be made by the worshipping parties themselves, and made so small, and of substances so little expensive, that the poorest may be provided with one as well as the richest. But if the parties do not choose to make the images themselves, they can be at no loss. There is an abundance of image-makers by profession. And, alas! in a city like Calcutta, the craft of image-making is by far the most lucrative and unfluctuating of all crafts. If there be thousands and tens of thousands of families that are to engage in the celebration of the festival, there must be thousands and tens of thousands of images prepared for it.

This explains to you the origin of the spectacle presented to your eyes in passing along the streets of Calcutta. Before, behind, on the right and on the left, here, and there, and every where, you seem encompassed with a forest of images of different sizes, and piles of limbs, and bodies, and fragments of images, of divers materials, finished and unfinished, — in all the intermediate stages of progressive fabrication. But not only is the sense of vision affected; the ears, too, are assailed by the noise of implements busily wielded by the workmen. You step aside, and, standing at the door of an image-maker's workshop, you gaze with wonder at the novel process.

After the abatement of the first surprise, you are impelled to address the men. "What!" you exclaim, "do you really believe that, with your own hands, you can, out of wood, and straw, and clay, fabricate a god before which you may fall down and worship?" "No," will be the prompt reply; "we believe no such thing." "What, then, do you believe?" "We believe," respond they, "that we mould and fashion only the representative image, or graven likeness, of the deity." "How, then, come you to worship it?" "Wait," may be the reply, "till the first great day of the feast, and you will then see how it is rendered worthy of homage and adoration."

As the great day approaches, symptoms of increasing preparation thicken and multiply all around. People are seen in every direction peaceably conveying the images to their houses. The materials for wonder-stirring exhibitions and ceremonial observances are every where accumulating. Thousands of residents from a distance are seen returning to their homes in the interior, laden with the earnings and the profits of months to lavish on

the great occasion. At length the government offices are by proclamation shut for a *whole week!* Secular business of every description, public or private, is suspended by land and by water, in town and in country. All things seem to announce the approach of a grand holiday — a season of universal joy and festivity.

It extends altogether over a period of fifteen days. The greater part of that time is occupied with the performance of preliminary ceremonies, previous to the three great days of worship. Early on the morning of the first of the three great days commences the grand rite of consecrating the images. Hitherto these have been regarded merely as combinations of lifeless, senseless matter. Now, however, by the power of the Brahmans, — those vicegerents of deity on earth, — they are to be endowed with life and intelligence. A wealthy family can always secure the services of one or more Brahmans; and of the very poor, a few may always unite, and secure the good offices of one of the sacred fraternity. At length the solemn hour arrives. The officiating Brahman, provided with the leaves of a sacred tree, and other holy accoutrements, approaches the image. With the two forefingers of his right hand he touches the breast, the two cheeks, the eyes, and the forehead of the image, at each successive touch giving audible utterance to the prayer, — "Let the spirit of Durga descend, and take possession of this image!" And thus, by the performance of various ceremonies, and the enunciation of various mystical verses or incantations, called *muntras*, the ghostly officiator is devoutly believed to possess the divine power of bringing down the goddess to take bodily possession of the image. The image is henceforward regarded as the peculiar local habitation of the divinity, and is believed to be really and truly animated by her. In this way, the relation of the visible image to the invisible deity is held to be precisely the same as the relation of the human body to the soul, or subtile spirit, that actuates it. The constant and universal belief is, that when the Brahman repeats the muntras, the deities must come, obedient to his call, agreeably to the favorite Sanskrit *sloka*, or verse — "The universe is under the power of the deities; the deities are under the power of the muntras; the muntras are under the power of the Brahmans; consequently, the Brahmans are gods." This is the creed of the more enlightened; but a vast proportion of the more ignorant and unreflecting believe something far more

gross. It is their firm persuasion that, by means of the ceremonies and incantations, the mass of rude matter has been actually changed or transformed, or, if you will, *transubstantiated*, into the very substance of deity itself. According to either view of the subject, whether more or less rational, the image is believed to be truly animated by divinity, — to be a real, proper, and legitimate object of worship. Having eyes, it can now behold the various acts of homage rendered by adoring votaries; having ears, it can be charmed by the symphonies of music and of song; having nostrils, it can be regaled with the sweet-smelling savor of incense and perfume; having a mouth, it can be luxuriated with the grateful delicacies of the rich banquet that is spread out before it.

Immediately after the consecration of the images, the worship commences, and is continued with numberless rites nearly the whole day. But what description can convey an idea of the multifarious complexity of Indian worship? — worship, too, simultaneously conducted in thousands of separate houses; for on such occasions every house is converted into a temple. To bring the subject within some reasonable compass, you must suppose yourself in the house of a wealthy native. Let it be one which is constructed, as usual, of a quadrangular form, — with a vacant area in the centre, open or roofless towards the canopy of heaven. On one side is a spacious hall, opening along the ground floor, by many folding doors, to piazzas or verandas on either side. These are crowded by the more common sort of visitors. Round the greater part of the interior is a range of galleries, with retiring chambers. Part of these is devoted to the reception of visitors of the higher ranks, whether European or native, and part is closed for the accommodation of the females of the family, who, without being seen themselves, may, through the venetians, view both visitors and worshippers, as well as the varied festivities. The walls, the columns, and fronts of the verandas and galleries, are all fantastically decorated with a profusion of tinsel ornaments of colored silk and paper, and glittering shapes and forms of gold and silver tissue. To crown all, there is, in the genuine Oriental style, an extravagant display of *lustres*, — suspended from the ceiling, and projecting from the walls, — which, when kindled at night, radiate a flood of light enough to dazzle and confound ordinary vision.

At the upper extremity of the hall is the ten-armed image of

the goddess, raised several feet on an ornamented pedestal. On either side of her are usually placed images of her two sons; — Ganesha, the god of wisdom, with his elephant head; and Kartikeya, the god of war, riding on a peacock. These are worshipped on this occasion, together with a multitude of demi-goddesses, the companions of Durga in her wars.

In the evening, about eight o'clock, the principal *pujah*, or worship, is renewed with augmented zeal. But what constitutes *pujah*, or *worship*, in that land? Watch the devotee, and you will soon discover. He enters the hall; he approaches the image, and prostrates himself before it. After the usual ablutions, and other preparatory rites, he next twists himself into a variety of grotesque postures; sometimes sitting on the floor, sometimes standing; sometimes looking in one direction, and sometimes in another. Then follows the ordinary routine of observances, [by the officiating Brahman;] sprinklings of the idol with holy water; rinsings of its mouth; washings of its feet; wipings of it with a dry cloth; throwings of flowers and green leaves over it; adornings of it with gaudy ornaments; exhalings of perfume; alternate tinklings and plasterings of the sacred bell with the ashes of sandal wood; mutterings of invocation for temporal blessings; and a winding up of the whole with the lowliest act of prostration, in which the worshipper stretches himself at full length, disposing his body in such a manner as at once to touch the ground with the eight principal parts of his body, viz., the feet, the thighs, the hands, the breast, the mouth, the nose, the eyes, and the forehead!

Then succeeds a round of carousals and festivity. The spectators are entertained with fruits and sweetmeats. Guests of distinction have *atar*, or the essence of roses, and rich conserves, abundantly administered. Musicians, with various hand and wind instruments, are introduced into the hall. Numbers of abandoned females, gayly attired, and glittering with jewels, are hired for the occasion to exhibit their wanton dances, and rehearse their indecent songs in praise of the idol, amid the plaudits of surrounding worshippers.

Another essential part of the worship consists in the presentation of different kinds of offerings to the idol. These offerings, after being presented with due form and ceremony, are eventually distributed among the attendant priests. No share of them is expected to be returned to the worshipper; so that, on his part, it is a real sacrifice. Whatever articles are once offered,

become consecrated, and are supposed to have some new and valuable qualities thereby imparted to them. Hence the more ignorant natives often come craving for a small portion of the sacred food, to be carried home, to cure diseases.

But it is to the almost incredible profusion of the offerings presented at such festivals that we would desire to call your special attention. In general it may be said that the bulk of the people, rich and poor, expend by far the larger moiety of their earnings or income on offerings to idols, and the countless rites and exhibitions connected with idol worship. At the celebration of one festival, a wealthy native has been known to offer after this manner — eighty thousand pounds' weight of sweetmeats; eighty thousand pounds' weight of sugar; a thousand suits of cloth garments; a thousand suits of silk; a thousand offerings of rice, plantains, and other fruits. On another occasion, a wealthy native has been known to have expended upwards of *thirty thousand pounds sterling* on the offerings, the observances, and the exhibition, of a single festival; and upwards of *ten thousand pounds annually*, ever afterwards to the termination of his life. Indeed, such is the blindfold zeal of these benighted people, that instances are not unfrequent of natives of rank and wealth reducing themselves and families to poverty by their lavish expenditure in the service of the gods, and in upholding the pomp and dignity of their worship. In the city of Calcutta alone, at the lowest and most moderate estimate, it has been calculated that *half a million*, at least, is *annually* expended on the celebration of the *Durga Pujah* festival. How vast, how inconceivably vast, then, must be the aggregate expended by rich and poor on *all* the daily, weekly, monthly, and annual rites, ceremonies, and festivals, held in honor of a countless pantheon of divinities!

Ah! it is when gazing at these heaps of offering, so lavishly poured into the treasury of the false gods of heathenism, that one is constrained to reflect, in bitterness of spirit, on the miserable contrast presented by the scanty, stinted, and shrivelled offerings of the professed worshippers of the true God in a Christian land! Would that, in this respect, the disciples of Christ could be induced to learn a lesson from the blinded votaries of Hinduism! Take the case of a renowned city, the third, in point of wealth and commercial importance, in the British empire; a city on whose escutcheon and banner is inscribed the noble motto, that it is to "flourish by the righteousness of the

Word." What has been, on the part of its citizens, the manifestation of a liberality that must needs astound all Christendom, and, if it were possible, cause the very universe to resound with the never-dying echoes of its fame? Why, this great city, whose merchants are princes and the honorable of the earth, — this mighty city, that sits as a queen among the principalities of the nations, — this celebrated city did, on a late occasion, in very truth, contribute the sum of *twenty thousand pounds* to promote, *within itself*, the cause of that Redeemer to whose vicarious sacrifice and mediatorial government it owes existence, and riches, and salvation, — all the possessions and comforts of time, — all the prospects and crowns of immortality! Well, be it so! We at once cheerfully concede that, *compared with the doings of others in this professedly Christian land*, this is one of the best and noblest specimens of modern benevolence. *But turn now to benighted Hindustan.* Look to one of its chief commercial emporia. *There*, on a *single* festival, in honor of a monstrous image of wood or clay, you find upwards of *five hundred thousand pounds* expended — not *once*, but *annually!* After this, talk, if ye will, of your liberalities. Boast of them. Eulogize them to the skies. Parade them, as munificent, in public journals. Extol them beyond measure at your great anniversaries. Would that, when next disposed to trumpet forth the praise of your own doings, ye would go and proclaim your magnificent contributions to the cause of *your* God and Savior in the presence of the deluded heathen, who replenish with free-will offerings the halls of *their* idol Durga. Ah! methinks that, instead of deigning to reply, they might point, in scornful silence, to the multiplied tokens and pledges of their own prodigal bounty, and leave you to draw an inference which might well cover you with confusion and dismay! For what could the inference be, were the silence and symbolic movement rightly interpreted and imbodied in words? What could it be but this? — "If the amount of free-will offerings be a measure of sincerity in our religious profession, surely our sincerity must be a hundred fold deeper than yours. If extent of sacrifice of worldly substance, to which we all so naturally cling, be a measure of our love to the object of worship, surely our love to our god, which you reckon a poor dumb idol, must be a hundred fold more intense than yours towards Him whom you profess to regard as the only true God and Savior. If visible fruits be the test of reality

of faith, surely our faith in the truth of our religion must be a hundred fold stronger than your faith in the truth of yours. Indeed, you seem to have scarcely any faith at all. And the little you do has the appearance of being designed to save you from the charge of open infidelity, rather than to indicate a heartfelt interest in promoting the cause and honor of your God." If a rebuke so cutting, from a quarter so unexpected, do not lead to amendment and increase in your Christian liberalities, rest assured that these poor blinded idolaters, whom you affect to view with pity and compassion, will one day rise up in judgment and condemn you.

The subject of offerings is not yet exhausted. At the annual festival of Durga, there are also *bloody sacrifices* presented. The *number* of these, though in general little thought of or little known, is very remarkable. When infidel scoffers have read in the Bible of the multitude of sacrifices constantly offered, — more especially when they read of King Solomon, on one memorable occasion, sacrificing twenty-two thousand oxen and a hundred and twenty thousand sheep, — they have not scrupled to denounce the narrative as wholly beyond the pale of historic credibility — as partaking so much of the fabulous and the marvellous as seriously to damage the authenticity of the entire record that contains it. Ignorant men! ignorant of the manners and customs of Oriental nations, and, ever true to the character of your race, presumptuous in proportion to your ignorance! Were ye transported to the shores of Hindustan now, ye would find, up to this day, multitudes of sacrifices constantly offered at temples and in private houses; in single cases almost rivalling, and, collectively and nationally, vastly out-rivalling in number the thousands and tens of thousands once offered by the Hebrew monarch, at a time when the sovereign reckoned it no impiety to allocate the resources of a state to the rearing of altars and temples to Jehovah, Lord of hosts; nor, as the most exalted member of the visible church, felt it any dishonor for a season to drop the functions of royalty, and, assuming part of the office of high priest, solemnly engage in conducting the devotional exercises of a national worship. And if the overwhelming evidence addressed to your understandings had failed to convince you of the veracity of the inspired penmen, must not the testimony of sense, as to the vast numbers of Hindu sacrifices, extort from you a confession in favor of the antece-

dent credibility of the Jewish record in the narration of numbers not more than parallel in magnitude?

At a single temple in the neighborhood of Calcutta, the *ordinary* number of *daily* sacrifices averages between fifty and a hundred he-goats and rams, besides a proportion of buffaloes. On Saturdays and Mondays, which happen to be days particularly sacred to the divinity worshipped there, the number of sacrifices is *doubled* or *trebled;* while, on great festival occasions, the number is increased from *hundreds* to *thousands.* At the annual festival of Durga, there are hundreds of families, in the Calcutta district alone, that sacrifice severally scores of animals; many present their hecatombs; and some occasionally their thousands. It is within the present half century that the rajah of Nudiya, in the north of Bengal, offered a large number of sheep, and goats, and buffaloes, on the first day of the feast, and vowed to double the offering on each succeeding day, so that the number sacrificed in all amounted, in the aggregate, to *upwards* of *sixty-five thousand!* Mr. Ward states, that the rajah "loaded boats with the bodies, and sent them to the neighboring Brahmans, but they could not devour or dispose of them fast enough, and great numbers were thrown away."

Returning to the scene in the house of a wealthy native on the first great day of the festival: — After the worship, and the offerings, and the dancings in honor of the goddess, have been concluded, the votaries proceed, after midnight, to the presentation of animals in sacrifice. It is in the central roofless court or area of the house that the process of slaughter is usually carried on. *There* a strong upright post is fastened in the ground, excavated at the top somewhat like a double-pronged fork. In this excavation the neck of the victim is inserted, and made fast by a transverse pin above. Close at hand stands the hired executioner, usually a blacksmith, with his broad, heavy axe. And woe be to him if he fail in severing the head at one stroke! Such failure would betide ruin and disgrace to himself, and entail the most frightful disaster on his employer and family!

Each animal is duly consecrated by the officiating Brahman, who marks its horns and forehead with red lead, — sprinkles it, for the sake of purifying, with Ganges water, — adorns its neck with a necklace of leaves, and its brow with a garland of flowers, — and reads various incantations in its ears, adding, "O Durga, I sacrifice this animal to thee, that I may dwell in thy heaven

for so many years." With similar ceremonies, each sacrificial victim, whether goat, sheep, or buffalo, is dedicated and slain, amid the din and hubbub of human voices. The heads and part of the blood are then carried in succession to the hall within, and ranged before the image, each head being there surmounted with a lighted lamp. Over them the officiating Brahman repeats certain prayers, utters appropriate incantations, and formally presents them as an acceptable feast to the goddess. Other meat-offerings and drink-offerings are also presented, with a repetition of the proper formulas. And, last of all, on a small, square altar, made of clean, dry sand, burnt-offerings of flowers, or grass, or leaves, or rice, or clarified butter, are deposited — with prayers, that all remaining sins may be destroyed by the sacrificial fire. This naturally leads us to answer a question that is often asked, namely, What becomes of the flesh meat of so many animals? Part of it is offered on the altar as a burnt-sacrifice. But the larger part of it always, and not unfrequently the whole, is devoured as food. The Brahmans of course have their choice; and the remainder is distributed in large quantities among the inferior castes. As it has been consecrated by being offered to the goddess, it is lawful for all who choose to partake of it.

It is impossible to note all the *variations* in the different *modes* in which the Durga Pujah is celebrated by the different castes and sects. Some individuals expend the largest proportion in peace-offerings, and meat and drink-offerings; others in bloody sacrifices and burnt-offerings: some in the dances, and the tinsel garnishings, and fire-work exhibitions; and others in entertaining and giving presents to Brahmans. The disciples of the numerous sect of Vishnu, though they celebrate the festival with great pomp, present no bloody offerings to Durga; instead of slaughtering animals, pumpkins, or some other substitute, are split in two and presented to the goddess.

The multitudinous rites and ceremonies of the first day and night of the festival being now nearly concluded, numbers of old and young, rich and poor, male and female, rush into the open area that is streaming with the blood of animals slain in sacrifice. They seize a portion of the gory dust and mud, and with the sacred compost literally bedaub their bodies, dancing and prancing all the while with almost savage ferocity. With their bodies thus bespattered, and their minds excited into frenzy, multitudes now pour into the streets — some with

blazing torches, others with musical instruments; and all, twisting their frames into the most wanton attitudes, and vociferating the most indecent songs, rush to and fro, reeling, shouting, and raving, more wildly than the troops of "iron-speared" and "ivy-leaved" Amazons, that were wont, in times of old, to cause the woods and the mountains of Greece to resound with the frantic orgies of Bacchus.

For two days and two nights more, there is a renewal of the same round of worship, and rites, and ceremonies, and dances, and sacrifices, and Bacchanalian fury.

As the morning of the first day was devoted to the consecration of the images, so the morning of the fourth is occupied with the grand ceremony of unconsecrating them. He, who had the divine power of bringing down the goddess to inhabit each tabernacle of wood or clay, has also the power of dispossessing it of her animating presence. Accordingly, the officiating Brahman, surrounded by the members of the family, engages, amid various rites, and sprinklings, and incantations, to send the divinity back to her native heaven; concluding with a farewell address, in which he tells the goddess that he expects her to accept of all his services, and to return again to renew her favors on the following year. All now unite in muttering a sorrowful adieu to the divinity, and many seem affected even to the shedding of tears.

Soon afterwards a crowd assembles, exhibiting habiliments bespotted with divers hues and colors. The image is carried forth to the street. It is planted on a portable stage, or platform, and then raised on men's shoulders. As the *temporary* local abode of the departed goddess, it is still treated with profound honor and respect. As the procession advances along the street, accompanied with music and songs, amid clouds of heated dust, you see human beings — yes, full-grown beings, wearing all the outward prerogatives of the human form — marching on either side, and waving their chouries, or long, hairy brushes, to wipe away the dust, and ward off the mosquitoes or flies, that might otherwise desecrate or annoy the senseless image. But whither does the procession tend? To the banks of the Ganges — most sacred of streams. For what purpose? Follow it, and you will see. As you approach the river, you every where behold numbers of similar processions, from town and country, before and behind, on the right and on the left. You cast your eyes along the banks. As far as vision can reach,

they seem literally covered. It is one *living, moving* mass — dense, vast, interminable. The immediate margin being too confined for the contact of such a teeming throng, hundreds and thousands of boats, of every size and every form, are put in requisition. A processional party steps on board, and each vessel is speedily launched on the broad expanse of the waters. The bosom of the stream seems, for miles, to be converted into the crowd, and the movement, and the harlequin exhibitions, of an immense floating fair. When the last rites and ceremonies are terminated, all the companies of image-carriers suddenly fall upon their images. They break them to pieces, and violently dash the shivered fragments into the depths of the passing stream. But who can depict the wondrous spectacle? — the numbers without number; the fantastic equipages of every rank and grade; the variegated costumes of every caste and sect; the strangely indecorous bodily gestures of deluded worshippers; the wild and frenzied mental excitement of myriads of spectators intoxicated with the scene; the breaking, crashing, and sinking, of hundreds of dispossessed images, along the margin and over the surface of the mighty stream, — amid the loud, shrill dissonance of a thousand untuneful instruments, commingled with the still more stunning peals of ten thousand thousand human voices! Here, language entirely fails. Imagination itself must sink down with wings collapsed, utterly baffled in the effort to conceive the individualities and the groupings of an assemblage composed of such varied magnitudes.

Towards evening the multitudes return to their homes. Return, you will ask, for the purpose of refreshment and repose? No; but to engage in fresh scenes of boisterous mirth and sensual revelry. But when these are at length brought to a close, is there not a season of respite? No: all hearts, all thoughts, are instantaneously turned towards the next incoming festival, in honor of some other divinity; and the neqessary preparations are at once set on foot to provide for its due celebration. And thus it has been for ages past; and thus it may be for ages to come; — unless the Christian people of these lands awake from the sleep of an ungodly, carnal security; arise from the deep slumber of sottish, selfish, luxurious enjoyment; and come forward, far beyond the standard of any present example, to advance the Redeemer's cause. O ye who do well to dwell at ease in your ceiled houses, when every where the temple of the Lord lies waste! — ye who do well to

eat, and drink, and be merry, when the multitudes of the nations are up in arms against your Sovereign Lord and Redeemer, — up in arms against the true peace and everlasting happiness of their own souls, — those precious souls that will never die! — ye *may* wholly resist every appeal that is thus addressed to you at a distance, in words; but, frozen-hearted as many of you are, *could* ye, we would ask, *wholly* resist the thrilling appeal which the direct exhibition of the terrible reality would address to you?

When we have stood on the banks of the Ganges, surrounded by deluded multitudes engaged in ablutions, in order to cancel the guilt and wipe away the stains of transgressions; here assailed by the groans of the sick and the dying, stretched on the wet banks beneath "a hot and copper sky," and there stunned by loud vociferations, in the name of worship, addressed to innumerable gods; on the one hand, the flames of many a funeral pile blazing in view, and, on the other, the loathsome spectacle of human carcasses floating, unheeded and unknown amid the dash of the oar and the merry songs of the boatmen; and when we felt our own solitude in the midst of the teeming throng, — a cold sensation of horror has crept through the soul, and the heart has well nigh sunk and failed, through the overbearing impressions of sense, and the desponding weakness of faith. "Gracious God," have we exclaimed, "how marvellous is the extent of thy long-suffering and forbearance! What earthly monarch could, for a single hour, endure the thousand thousandth part of the indignities that are here *daily* offered to thy throne and majesty, O thou King of kings! And yet, thus it has been for ages! Lord, how long will it continue to be? Forever? No; no!" When we look at the apparently unchanged past, and survey the apparently unchangeable present, the review and contemplation seem to sound the death-knell of hope, that would cradle us in black despair. But when we glance at the future, as portrayed in the "sure word of prophecy," we there learn to realize the mystery of "hoping against hope." From these polluted waters of a turbid earthly stream, we turn the eye of faith to the waters of gospel grace, which are seen, in the prophetic vision, to issue from under the threshold of the temple of Zion *eastward*. They swell and deepen into a river. It is the river of life. Wherever it rolls, disease, barrenness, and death disappear.

Procession at a Hindu Festival.

THE CHARAK PUJAH OR KALI FESTIVAL.

Consigning an Image of Kali to the Ganges.

NEXT to the annual festival of Durga, one of the most popular in Eastern India is that of the *Charak Pujah.*

Strictly and properly, this festival is held in honor of Shiva, in his character of *Maha Kala;* or *Time*, the great destroyer of all things. In this character, his personified energy, or consort, is Parvati, under the distinction and appropriate form of Maha Kali. In the annual festival held in honor of the former, the worship of the latter appears at all times to have been blended; and, in the lapse of ages, the female form of *Kali* has become a far more important and formidable personage, in the eyes of the multitude, than the male form of Maha Kala, and often engrosses more than a proportionate share of the homage and adoration of deluded worshippers. To save, therefore, the tediousness of circumlocution, and the intricacy of a perpetual double reference, we must confine ourselves to a brief notice of the goddess *Kali*, as connected with the celebration of the Charak Pujah.

It is proper, however, to state, that Brahmans, Kshattryas, and the Vaishyas, take no *active* part in the *actual* celebration of the rites peculiar to this festival. Most of them, however, contribute largely towards the expense of it, and countenance the

whole of the proceedings as applauding spectators; though some of them, *in words*, profess to disapprove of many of the practices.

Of all the Hindu divinities, this goddess is the most cruel and revengeful. Such, according to some of the sacred legends, is her thirst for blood, that, — being unable, in one of her forms, on a particular occasion, to procure any of the giants for her prey, — in order to quench her savage appetite, she "actully cut her own throat, that the blood issuing thence might spout into her mouth." Of the goddess, — represented in the monstrous attitude of supporting her own half-severed head in the left hand, with streams of blood gushing from the throat into the mouth, — images may this day be seen in some districts of Bengal. The supreme delight of this divinity, therefore, consists in cruelty and torture; her ambrosia is the flesh of living votaries and sacrificed victims; and her sweetest nectar, the copious effusion of their blood.

The Kalika Purana, one of the divine writings, is chiefly devoted to a recital of the different modes of worshipping and appeasing this ferocious divinity. If, for example, a devotee should scorch some member of his body by the application of a burning lamp, the act would prove most acceptable to the goddess. If he should draw some blood from himself, and present it, the libation would be still more delectable. If he should cut off a portion of his own flesh, and present it as a burnt sacrifice, the offering would be most grateful of all. If the devotee should present *whole* burnt-offerings upon the altar, saying, — "Hrang, hring, Kali, Kali! — O! horrid-toothed goddess, eat, eat; destroy all the malignant; cut with this axe; bind, bind; seize, seize; drink this blood; spheng, spheng; secure, secure! — Salutation to Kali!" — these will prove acceptable in proportion to the supposed importance of the animated beings sacrificed.' By the blood drawn from fishes and tortoises the goddess is pleased one month; a crocodile's blood will please her three; that of certain wild animals, nine; that of a bull or a guana, a year; an antelope's or wild boar's, twelve years; a buffalo's, rhinoceros's, or tiger's, a hundred; a lion's, a reindeer's, *or a man's*, (mark the combination,) a thousand; but by the blood of *three men* slain in sacrifice, she is pleased a *hundred thousand years!* Amid all the voluminous codes of Hinduism, there is not a section more loathsomely minute, more hideously revolting, than the sanguinary chapter devoted

to the description of the rites and formularies to be observed at the sacrifice of *human* victims.

Under the native dynasties, it cannot be doubted that human sacrifices were very largely offered. And, even now, when this species of sacrifice has been condemned, and declared to be punishable as murder, by the British government, clearly authenticated cases do still occasionally occur. During our own brief sojourn in Calcutta, a human victim was sacrificed at a temple of Kali in its immediate neighborhood. The sacrificer was seized by the officers of justice, and capitally punished. About the same time, the governor-general felt himself called upon to strip a rajah, in the east of Bengal, of his independent rights, because, in direct violation of existing treaties, he had carried off *three* British subjects to be offered in sacrifice to Kali!

Indeed, this divinity is the avowed patroness of almost all the most atrocious outrages against the peace of society. Is there in India, as in other lands, a set of lawless men who, despising the fruits of honest industry, earn their livelihood by the plunder of their neighbors' property? At the hour of midnight, the gang of desperadoes will resort to some spot where is reared an image of Kali. There they engage in religious ceremonies, and there they offer bloody sacrifices to propitiate the favor and secure the protection of the goddess. Worshipping the instrument that is to cut through the wall of the house intended to be attacked, they address it in a *prescribed* form of words, saying, — "O instrument, formed by the goddess! Kali commands thee to cut a passage into the house; to cut through stones, bones, bricks, wood, the earth, and mountains; and cause the dust thereof to be carried away by the wind!" In full assurance of the divine blessing, and with unwavering faith in the divine protection, they hasten to the execution of their nefarious designs. How must the very foundations of even ordinary moral duties be swept away in a land where theft and plunder can be systematically carried on under the special patronage of the gods!

Again, is there in India, — as there is not, we believe, in any other land on the surface of the globe, — a still more lawless race of men, — a close, compact, confederate fraternity, — whose irresistible fate and hereditary profession it is to subsist by *murder?* These, too, well known under the name of *Thugs*, find a ready and potent protectress in Kali. To the divinely-revealed will and command of this goddess, they universally

ascribe their origin, their institutions, their social laws, and their ritual observances. Intense devotion to Kali is the mysterious link that unites them in a bond of brotherhood that is indissoluble; and with a secrecy which, for generations, has eluded the efforts of successive governments to detect them. It is under her special auspices that all their sanguinary depredations have been planned, prosecuted, and carried into execution. It is the thorough incorporation of a feeling of assurance in her aid, with the entire framework of their mental and moral being, that has imparted to their union all its strength and all its terror. In their sense of the term, they are of all men the most superstitiously exact, the most devoutly religious, in the performance of divine worship. In honor of their guardian deity, there is a temple dedicated at Bindachul, near Mirzapur, to the north of Bengal. *There*, religious ceremonies are constantly performed, and thousands of animals offered in sacrifice. When a band of these leagued murderers, whose individuality and union have for ages been preserved in integrity, resolve to issue forth on their worse than marauding expedition, deliberately intent on imbruing their hands in the blood of their fellows, they first betake themselves to the temple of the goddess; present their prayers, and supplications, and offerings there; and vow, in the event of success, to consecrate to her service a large proportion of the booty. Should they not succeed, — should they even be seized, convicted, and condemned to die, — their confidence in Kali does not waver; their faith does not stagger. They exonerate the goddess from all blame. They ascribe the cause of failure wholly to themselves. They assume all the guilt of having *neglected* some of the *divinely* prescribed forms. And they laugh to scorn the idea that any evil could possibly have befallen them, had they been faithful in the observance of all the divinely-appointed rules of their sanguinary craft. How must the chief corner-stone of ordinary morality be shaken, in a land where religion is so versatile as to throw the ample shield of divine encouragement and reward over the most murderous banditti that ever appeared in human form!

If such be the general character of this goddess, what are you to expect of a festival held in honor of her lord, in his character as the *great destroyer*, — a festival in which she, too, is adored, as his destructive energy!

Most of the sectaries that embrace the form of Maha Kala as their guardian deity — belonging chiefly to the class of Shu-

dras — are busied for several days before the festival with various initiatory ceremonies of purification, abstinence, and exercises of devotion; and those who wish to earn great merit on the occasion are engaged in preparatory operations for a whole month.

The festival itself derives its name of *Charak Pujah* from *chakra*, a discus or wheel, in allusion to the *circle* performed in the rite of *swinging*, which constitutes so very prominent a part of the anniversary observances. An upright pole, twenty or thirty feet in height, is planted in the ground. Across the top of it, moving freely on a pin or pivot, is placed horizontally another long pole. From one end of this transverse beam is a rope suspended, with two hooks affixed to it. To the other extremity is fastened another rope, which hangs loosely towards the ground. The devotee comes forward, and prostrates himself in the dust. The hooks are then run through the fleshy parts of his back, near the shoulders. A party, holding the rope at the other side, immediately begin to run round with considerable velocity. By this means the wretched dupe of superstition is hoisted aloft into the air, and violently whirled round and round. The torture he may continue to endure for a longer or shorter period, according to his own free-will; only, this being reckoned one of the holiest of acts, the longer he can endure the torture the greater the pleasure conveyed to the deity whom he serves; the greater the portion of merit accruing to himself; and, consequently, the brighter the prospect of future reward. The time usually occupied averages from ten minutes to half an hour; and as soon as one has ended, another candidate is ready, — aspiring to earn the like merit and distinction. And thus, on one tree, from five to ten or fifteen may be swung in the course of a day. Of these swinging-posts there are hundreds and thousands simultaneously in operation in the province of Bengal. They are always erected in the most conspicuous parts of the towns and villages, and are surrounded by vast crowds of noisy spectators. On the very streets of the native city of Calcutta, many of these horrid swings are annually to be seen, and scores around the suburbs. It not unfrequently happens that, from the extreme rapidity of the motion, the ligaments of the back give way, in which case the poor devotee is tossed to a distance, and dashed to pieces. A loud wail of commiseration, you now suppose, will be raised in behalf of the unhappy man who has thus fallen a martyr to his religious

enthusiasm. No such thing! Idolatry is cruel as the grave. Instead of sympathy or compassion, a feeling of detestation and abhorrence is excited towards him. By the principles of their faith, he is adjudged to have been a desperate criminal *in a former state of being;* and he has now met with this violent death, in the present birth, as a righteous retribution, on account of egregious sins committed in a former!

The evening of the same day is devoted to another practice almost equally cruel. It consists in the devotees' throwing themselves down, from a high wall, the second story of a house, or a temporary scaffolding often twenty or thirty feet in height, upon iron spikes or knives that are thickly stuck in a large bag or mattress of straw. But these sharp instruments being fixed rather loosely, and in a position sloping forward, the greater part of the thousands that fall upon them dexterously contrive to escape without serious damage. Many, however, are often cruelly mangled and lacerated; and, in the case of some, the issue proves speedily fatal.

At night, numbers of the devotees sit down in the open air, and pierce the skin of their foreheads; and in it, as a socket, place a small rod of iron, to which is suspended a lamp that is kept burning till the dawn of day, while the lamp-bearers rehearse the praises of their favorite deity.

Again, before the temple, bundles of thorns and other firewood are accumulated, among which the devotees roll themselves uncovered. The materials are next raised into a pile, and set on fire. Then the devotees briskly dance over the blazing embers, and fling them into the air with their naked hands, or toss them at one another.

Some have their breasts, arms, and other parts, stuck entirely full of pins, about the "thickness of small nails, or packing-needles." Others betake themselves to a vertical wheel, twenty or thirty feet in diameter, and raised considerably above the ground. They bind themselves to the outer rim, in a sitting posture, so that, when the wheel rolls round, their heads point alternately to the zenith and the nadir.

But it were endless to pursue the diversity of these self-inflicted cruelties into all their details. There is one, however, of so very singular a character, that it must not be left unnoticed. If the problem were proposed to any member of our own community to contrive some other distinct species of torture, — amid the boundless variety which the most fertile ima-

gination might figure to itself, probably the one now to be described would not be found. Some of these deluded votaries enter into a vow. With one hand they cover their under-lips with a layer of wet earth or mud; on this, with the other hand, they deposit some small grains, usually of mustard-seed. They then stretch themselves flat on their backs, — exposed to the dripping dews of night and the blazing sun by day. And their vow is, that from that fixed position they will not stir, — will neither move, nor turn, nor eat, nor drink, — till the seeds planted on the lips begin to sprout or germinate. This vegetable process usually takes place on the third or fourth day; after which, being released from the vow, they arise, as they dotingly imagine and believe, laden with a vast accession of holiness and supererogatory merit.

To the south of Calcutta is a spacious, level plain, between two and three miles in length, and a mile, or a mile and a half, in breadth. On the west it is washed by the sacred Ganges, on whose margin, about the middle of the plain, Fort William rears its ramparts and battlements. Along the north is a magnificent range of buildings, — the Supreme Court, the Town Hall, with other public edifices, — and, in the centre, most conspicuous of all, the arcades, and columns, and lofty dome of Government House. Along the whole of the eastern side, at short intervals, is a succession of palace-like mansions, occupied as the abodes of the more opulent of the European residents. In front of this range, facing the west, and between it, therefore, and the plain, is the broadest and most airy street in Calcutta, well known under the name of Chowringhee. Chiefly to the north of the plain, and partly to the east, beyond the ranges of European offices and residences, lies the native city, — stretching its intricate mass of narrow lanes, and red brick houses, and "hive-like" bamboo huts, over an extent of many miles, and teeming with *half a million* of human beings! At a short distance from the south-east corner of the plain, across a narrow belt of low suburban cottages, lies the celebrated temple of Kali-Ghat. The grand direct thoroughfare towards it, from the native city, is along the Chowringhee road.

Thither, early, before sunrise, on the morning of the great day of the Charak festival, we once hastened to witness the extraordinary spectacle.

From all the lanes and alleys leading from the native city, multitudes were pouring into the Chowringhee road, which

seemed at every point to symbolize the meeting of the waters, — realizing, through its entire length, the image of a mighty confluence of innumerable living streams. The mere spectators could easily be distinguished from the special devotees. The former were seen standing, or walking along with eager gaze; arrayed in their gayest holiday dress, exhibiting every combination and variety of the snow-white garb and tinsel glitter of Oriental costume. The latter came marching forward in small isolated groups, — each group averaging, in number, from half-a-dozen to twelve or fifteen, and constituted somewhat after this manner: Most of the party have their loose robes and foreheads plentifully besprinkled with vermilion or rose-pink. Two or three of them are decked in speckled or party-colored garments, uttering ludicrous, unmeaning sounds, and playing off all sorts of antic gestures, not unlike the merry-andrews on the stage of a country fair. Two or three, with garlands of flowers hanging about their neck, or tied round the head, have their sides transpierced with iron rods, which project in front, and meet at an angular point, to which is affixed a small vessel in the form of a shovel. Two or three, covered with ashes, carry in their hands iron spits or rods of different lengths, small bamboo canes or hookah tubes, hard-twisted cords, or living snakes whose fangs had been extracted, — bending their limbs into unsightly attitudes, and chanting legendary songs. Two or three more are the bearers of musical instruments — horned trumpets, gongs, tinkling cymbals, and large, hoarse drums surmounted with towering bunches of black and white ostrich feathers, which keep waving and nodding not unlike the heaving, sombre plumes of a hearse; and all of them belabored as furiously as if the impression were, that the louder the noise, and the more discordant the notes, the better and more charming the music. Thus variously constituted, the groups of devotees were proceeding along. On looking behind, one group was seen following after another as far as the eye could reach; on looking before, one group was seen preceding another, as far as the eye could reach; — like wave after wave, in interminable succession.

Besides these groups of worshippers, who are reckoned pre-eminent in holiness and merit, there are others that advance in processions, bearing various pageants, flags, banners, models of temples, images of gods, and other mythological figures, with portable stages on which men and women are engaged in ridiculous and often worse than ridiculous pantomimic performances.

Hundreds of these processions spread over the southern side of the plain, presenting a spectacle so vast and varied — so singular and picturesque — that the pencil of the most skilful artist would not be dishonored if it failed in adequately representing it.

At the extremity of Chowringhee, the road towards the temple narrows considerably. The throng is now so dense that one is literally carried along. On approaching the precincts of the sacred shrine, it is found surrounded by a court and high wall. After entering the principal gate, which is on the western side, the temple itself starts up full in view. To the south of it is a spacious open hall or portico, elevated several feet above the ground, and surrounded by a flight of steps, above which rise a range of pillars that support the roof. Between the portico and the temple is a narrow pathway, along which the stream of spectators was flowing; while the groups of the devotees marched round the side farthest from the temple. Being of the number of the spectators, we mingled with the teeming throng that pressed on, with maddening frenzy, to obtain a glimpse of the idol. Here one and another would start aside, and knock their heads against the temple wall or brick pavement, muttering incantations to command the attention and attract the favor of the goddess. It may here be noticed, in passing, that a temple in India is not, like a Christian church, a place for the disciples to assemble in and engage in reasonable worship; but it is ordinarily designed as merely a receptacle for the senseless block of the idol, and a company of Brahmans, as its guardian attendants. Hence, as there is not much occasion for light, there are few or no windows. The light of day is usually admitted only by the front door, when thrown wide open. Darkness is thus commingled with light in the idol cell, and tends to add to the mysteriousness of the scene. The multitudes all congregate without; but there is no *preaching* in their "halls of convocation;" no devotional exercises to raise the soul on the wings of heavenly contemplation; no instructions in the knowledge of the true God or the plan of a complete salvation; no inculcation of motives to lead to the forsaking of sin; no animated exhortations to the cultivation of virtue and piety: all, all, is one unchanging round of sacrifice and ceremony — of cruelty, and sport, and lifeless form.

Standing immediately opposite the temple gate, we saw on either side stationed, as usual, a party of Brahmans, to receive

the proffered gifts. On one side lay a heap of flowers, that had been consecrated by being carried within and presented to the goddess; on the other side, a large heap of money, — copper, and silver, and gold, — that had been contributed as free-will offerings. To the spectators, as they passed along, the Brahmans were presenting consecrated flowers, which were eagerly carried off as precious relics; and, in exchange for them, the joyous votaries threw down what money they possessed. And this they did as profusely as it was assuredly done cheerfully and without a grudge. Ah, here again were we painfully reminded of the state of things, as regards *liberality on principle*, in Christian lands. What a contrast to our meagre and half-extorted contributions, in the cause of Christian benevolence, was presented by the spectacle at the temple of Kali-Ghat! "What!" was one led to exclaim, — "what! is it really so, that error is fraught with a mightier charm than truth? — that a foul and sanguinary superstition can operate on the soul more effectually than the benign religion of heaven? — that ignorance is more powerful than divine knowledge? — that heathenish custom is superior in efficacy to enlightened principle? — and that the fear of a dumb idol can exert a more potent influence than the love of a bleeding, dying Savior? Ah, if this be so, what can our inference be, except that, amongst us, almost every one ought to bear about him a frontlet between his eyes, inscribed with the motto, 'Profession, not principle!' — and that almost all, having a name to live, are nevertheless dead in spiritual lethargy and slumber, and deaf to the most sacred claims of duty towards God and man!"

And one's wonder could not be diminished, when he looked within the temple, and, in the midst of the "darkness visible," beheld the horrid block of the idol that had succeeded in conquering men's selfishness, and in turning the stagnant pool of grasping covetousness into a running stream of lavish liberality. The figure within this temple is, in several of its parts, for what reason we know not, somewhat incomplete; but it is still sufficiently frightful and hideous. In the sacred legends the goddess is constantly described, and, in the thousands of images that are annually made of her, she is almost uniformly delineated, as a female of black or dark-blue complexion, dancing savagely on the body of her own husband. She is represented with four arms, having in one an exterminating sword, and in another a human head held fast by the hair; a third points

downwards, "indicating the destruction that surrounds her," and the fourth is raised upwards, "in allusion to the future regeneration of nature by a new creation." She is represented with wild, dishevelled hair, reaching to her feet. Her countenance is most ferocious. Her tongue protrudes from a distorted mouth, and hangs over the chin. She has three eyes, red and fiery, one of which glares in her forehead. Her lips and eyebrows are streaked with blood, and a crimson torrent is streaming down her breast. She has ear-rings in her ears; but what are they? — they are the carcasses of some hapless victims of her fury. She has a girdle round the waist; but what is it? — it is a girdle of bloody hands, said to have been cut off the wounded bodies of her prostrate foes. She has a necklace round the neck; but what is it? — it is a necklace of ghastly skulls, said to have been cut off the thousands of giants and others slain in her battles. And such is the monster-divinity, who, on that day, calls forth the shouts, and acclamations, and free-will offerings, of myriads of adoring worshippers!

Passing now to the eastern side of the court, we soon saw what the groups of devotees were to be engaged in. Towards the wall there were stationed several blacksmiths, with sharp instruments in their hands. Those of a particular group, that carried the rods, canes, and other implements, now came forward. One would stretch out his side, and, getting it instantly pierced through, in would pass one of his rods or canes. Another would hold out his arm, and, getting it perforated, in would pass one of his iron spits or tubes. A third would protrude his tongue, and getting it, too, bored through, in would pass one of his cords or serpents. And thus, all of a group that desired it had themselves variously transpierced or perforated. When these had finished, another group was waiting in readiness to undergo the cruel operation; and so another and another, apparently without end.

Several groups, then returning, mounted the steps of the portico in front of the temple, to prepare for their most solemn act of worship. But O, how impotent must human language ever be in the attempt to convey an adequate impression of the scene that followed!

Those of the different groups, that carried in front the vessels already referred to, now ranged themselves all around the interior of the colonnade. All the rest assembled themselves within this living circle. On a sudden, at a signal given, commenced

the bleating, and the lowing, and the struggling, of animals slaughtered in sacrifice at the farthest end of the portico; and speedily was the ground made to swim with sacrificial blood. At the same moment of time, the vessel-carriers threw upon the burning coals in their vessels handfuls of Indian pitch, composed of various combustible substances. Instantly ascended the smoke, and the flame, and the sulphureous smell. Those who had the musical instruments sent forth their loud, and jarring, and discordant sounds. And those who were transpierced began dancing in the most frantic manner, — pulling backwards and forwards, through their wounded members, the rods and the canes, the spits and the tubes, the cords and the writhing serpents, till their bodies seemed streaming with their own blood! All this was carried on *simultaneously;* and that, too, within a briefer period of time than has now been occupied in the feeble and inadequate attempt to describe it! Again and again would the loud shouts ascend from the thousands of applauding spectators — shouts of "Victory to Kali! Victory to the great Kali!"

O, as we gazed at the harrowing spectacle, how was the soul, by the resistless force of contrast, hurried away to more highly-favored climes! Yes; — standing though we were at the distance of fifteen thousand miles from our native land, how did the soul, with lightning speed, flee across intervening oceans and continents, and, in the chambers of imagery, revive and realize the visions of other days! When we thought of the land of our fathers, — when we contrasted the pure, peaceful, soul-elevating exercises of its Sabbaths, with the scene of infernal revelries then before our view, — how could we help exclaiming, "Surely, if the former be a fit emblem and harbinger of that eternal Sabbath which rolls over heaven's bright inhabitants, this other scene must be an emblem and harbinger of the restless tossings of the burning lake!" And O, is it possible that, if Christians were transported hither to gaze, but for a single moment, on such a master-triumph of Satanic delusion, — is it conceivable that they could give sleep to their eyes, or slumber to their eyelids, till they entered a vow in heaven to do all that in them lay to demolish such a hideous fabric of idolatry and superstition, and rear the beauteous temple of Christianity upon the ruins?

In conclusion, therefore, we would, with our whole heart, and strength, and soul, call upon all, who profess to be disciples of the Lord Jesus, to come forward now "to the help of the Lord,

to the help of the Lord against the mighty." We call upon you by that wondrous scheme, for the redemption of a ruined world, which from all eternity engaged the counsels of the Godhead, to compassionate the poor, dying, perishing heathen; — not to allow the prince of darkness any longer to trample on his miserable victims without control, or drag them as unresisting captives along the broad road that leadeth to perdition. We call upon you by the miseries of earth, the torments of hell, the joys of heaven, — by all that the Savior has done and suffered in his vicarious obedience, and agony, and bloody sweat, — to come forth now and be instrumental in erecting the standard of the cross on the downfall of the crescent and the ruins of paganism; and thus to snatch from the regions of woe the souls of many who may be fitted to sing the praises of Jehovah and the Lamb! We call upon you, by your own eternal destiny, not to allow the fountain of divine benevolence, once opened on the hill of Calvary, to remain there from age to age shut up and sealed — a mere spectacle of solitary, and useless, and barren grandeur. But come now, and draw therefrom in copious streams; replenish your reservoirs; fertilize the soil; and thus produce a rich harvest of fruit, which, when the earth and all the works therein are burnt up, and the visible heavens are no more, will increase in beauty, and flourish forever on the shores of a blissful immortality!

Ganesa.

Brahma

CURIOSITIES

AND

REMARKABLE CUSTOMS

IN

PAGAN AND MOHAMMEDAN COUNTRIES;

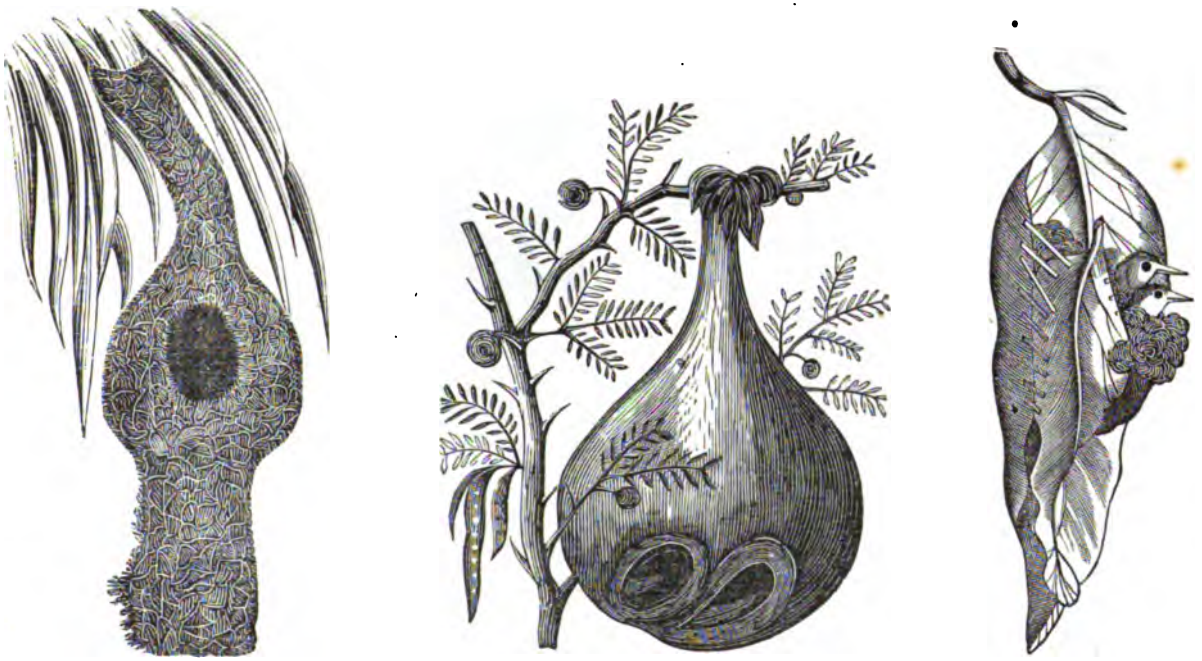
ILLUSTRATED BY

ANECDOTES

AND

NUMEROUS ENGRAVINGS.

PUBLISHED BY CALEB WRIGHT.



CURIOUS NESTS OF EAST INDIA BIRDS.

CURIOSITIES

AND

REMARKABLE CUSTOMS.

Curious Nests of East India Birds.

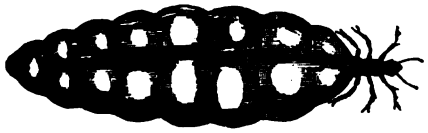
In the opposite engraving are three pendulous nests, very ingeniously constructed. The one on the left is the nest of the Indian sparrow, *loxia Bengaliensis*. It is made of grass, very curiously interwoven, like cloth, and contains two or three apartments. The sagacious occupants of these beautifully-constructed dwellings are said to light them, at night, with fire-flies, which they catch alive and confine with moist clay. The second nest, which is that of the baya, another species of sparrow, is also made of grass, and contains several apartments. It is suspended from a small twig, with the entrance downward, to secure its inmates from the attack of squirrels and other enemies. These birds associate in large communities, and hundreds of their pendulous nests may be seen suspended from the outer branches of one tree.

"Equally curious in the structure of his nest," says Mr. Forbes, "and far superior in the variety and elegance of his plumage, is the tailor bird of Hindustan, so called from his instinctive ingenuity in forming his nest. He first selects a plant with large leaves, and then gathers cotton from the shrub, spins it to a thread by means of his long bill and slender feet, and then, as with a needle, sews the leaves neatly together, to conceal his nest.

"The tailor bird resembles some of the humming-birds at the Brazils in shape and color. The hen is clothed in brown; but the plumage of the cock displays the varied tints of azure, purple, green, and gold, so common in those American beauties."

WHITE ANTS.

MALE. FEMALE. NEUTER.



FEMALE OR QUEEN.

ANT NEST.

The white ants of India are very destructive to the wood-work of buildings, and to furniture and merchandise of every kind. An engineer, having returned from a journey, left his trunk on a table; the next morning, not only were all his clothes found devoured, there being scarcely a piece as large as a shilling free from holes, but his papers also were destroyed, nor was a piece of them left an inch square. The nest of the white ant is very ingeniously constructed of clay, and, in the course of three or four years, rises to the height of ten or twelve feet. No sooner is a

colony established than the queen supplies it with a large population. Her abdomen increases until it becomes fifteen hundred or two thousand times larger than the rest of her body; thus she equals in size twenty or thirty thousand of her own subjects, and she sometimes lays her eggs at the rate of sixty in a minute, or more than eighty thousand in a day.

A Nest of Yellow Ants.

Remarkable Instinct of Yellow Ants.

It is a remarkable fact that yellow ants keep and feed certain other insects for the purpose of obtaining from them a sweet nutritious liquid. These insects, which may be regarded as the milch cows of the ants, are the aphides, or plant-lice. They insert their suckers into the bark of plants, and thus absorb their sap, which becomes by digestion a fluid, scarcely inferior in sweetness to honey. The aphides occasionally throw it to a distance by a sudden muscular effort; and, when ants are present, they watch this movement and immediately drink the liquid. They know, too, how to milk the aphides, patting the abdomen first on one side and then on the other, with their antennæ, and eagerly drinking the drop which issues forth. An ant, having exhausted the milk of one aphis, goes to others, and when satiated returns to its dwelling.

A Hindu Family carrying Offerings to an Idol.

Mrs. Porter, the wife of a missionary in India, once met a man and woman with their three children. They were on their way to Amoor's temple. She asked them where they were going. They said, "To make worship." The man carried, in one hand, a fowl for sacrifice, and with the other led a little boy, who had in his hand three sweet potatoes. On the man's shoulder was a little girl, about three years old, who had in her hand a cocoa-nut. The woman carried a brass plate containing a little rice and saffron, some sugar, and some flowers. In her arms was a little child only a year old, and in its tiny hand it carried a plantain. Mrs. Porter asked, "What is this for?" "It is for sacrifice," replied the mother.

The view in the engraving is a part of Saugor Island, situated at the mouth of the Ganges. It is inhabited only by wild beasts. Tigers are very numerous there. These ferocious animals sometimes attack the alligator, when a terrible battle ensues. Saugor is remarkable for being the place where a great annual festival is celebrated. In 1837 it was announced, in some of the public journals in Calcutta, that the number of boats at the island during the festival of that year was *sixty thousand;* and that the number of pilgrims could not have been less than *three hundred thousand.* "Saugor Island is the spot, and the January festival the solemn occasion, on which hundreds of mothers were wont, in fulfilment of solemn vows, to throw their unconscious, smiling infants into the turbid waters! And O, horrid to relate! they bewailed the sacrifice as lost, and the gods unpropitiated, if these commissioned not the shark, and other monsters of the deep, to crush and devour their hapless offspring before their own eyes!" The sacrifice of children, at this festival, is now prohibited by the British government.

A Superstitious Custom.

When the heathen of Ceylon are sick unto death, they call for the Brahmins to say mundrams over them; for which they make presents, and, among other things, a cow is often provided. The sick person takes hold of the tail of this cow, and, if possible, holds it in his hand while dying, professing to believe that by doing so the cow will assist him to cross the river of fire which lies between this and the world to which they go. After the spirit has left the body, the cow is driven away to the Brahmins.

Interesting Incident in Ceylon.

The inhabitants of Bambellepittya, in Ceylon, requested the missionaries to take charge of their school. At an appointed time, the scholars, with a large concourse of people, assembled in a beautiful grove of palm-trees, in which the school-house was situated. One of the missionaries addressed the people as follows: "As Christian ministers, sent by the Christian church, we cannot give any of our time, nor be at any expense, except to teach Christianity; and these parents, and all others here assembled, are aware that, should we take their school under our care, we should be unfaithful to those who sent us, but especially to Jehovah, should we allow any heathenism to remain in it." About fifty sprightly-looking boys were then ordered, by their

Seminary at Batticotta, Ceylon.

parents and their teacher, to advance and give up their heathen books. In exchange for these, which were written on palm-leaf, and contained the most worthless and abominable trash, each boy received a Christian school book, suited to his attainments. A renunciation of heathenism was then read, which was listened to with the most profound attention; and, when it was finished, there was a general shout of "*Hondi!*" "That is good."

A Hindu Devotee.

A young man, from Ougein, came to the annual fair at Ooncar, for the purpose of devoting himself to Bhyru, by leaping from a rock which overhangs the Nerbudda. He stated that, while sleeping near a temple, in the vicinity of Ougein, he was awakened by a smart blow on the shoulder; and, on looking around, he discovered a cocoa-nut, a knife, and a looking-glass. On casting his eye on the glass, he became sensible of the presence of Bhyru, who commanded him to go to Ooncar and sacrifice himself, telling him he had already performed the sacrifice several times in former births, and this was the last time it would be required of him. On the morning of his immolation, he was early at the temple of Bhyru; and having performed the customary ceremonies, and presented some money to his divinity, — a huge stone smeared with red paint, — he began to ascend the rock. When he arrived at the brink of the precipice, he made some wild gesticulations to the multitude below; cast down the cocoa-nut, glass, and knife; then,

stepping back a few paces, rushed forward, and, springing into the air, was in a moment precipitated to the bottom and dashed to pieces.

The Islanders sacrificing a Human Victim.

The Islanders.

Not many centuries ago, there existed a people, on a certain island, who were very ignorant, superstitious, and cruel. They lived in rude huts, made by driving stakes into the earth, and covering them with the branches of trees. They were clad in the skins of wild beasts, tattooed their bodies, subsisted by fishing and hunting, and on the flesh and milk of their cattle, and were unacquainted with the institution of marriage. We cannot ascertain that they excelled in any art, except in that of making wicker baskets. Their religion had no tendency to elevate their character, for they believed in the transmigration of souls, and worshipped the sun, the moon, and deified men. Their religious ceremonies were performed in shady groves, or in rude temples of huge, rough stones, without roofs, the ruins of which are still to be seen. Cæsar, in his Commentaries, informs us that one of their religious ceremonies consisted in making, of wicker-work, a hollow image of a man, about sixty feet in height, filling it with living men, women, and children, setting it on fire, and seeing these unhappy victims perish in the flames. Lucan, in describing one of their sacred groves, says, "Nothing was to be seen there but multitudes

of altars on which they sacrifice human victims." Says Pliny, "They consider it a part of their most solemn and most obligatory religion to put men to death; and to feed on their dead bodies they esteem most wholesome."

Such was their condition; yet they were not the dark sons of Ham, nor could their degradation be attributed to the influence of climate. THEY WERE WITHOUT THE BIBLE. A few of these white sons of barbarism were brought to Rome, and sold in the public market as slaves. Some zealous Christians in that city took an interest in their welfare, and established a mission on their native island. Numbers were soon converted to Christianity, the Bible was translated into their language, schools were established, the arts and sciences taught, mind elevated, the social and moral feelings cultivated, and soon these barbarous tribes became a great, a noble, and enlightened people. The influence of their power, enterprise, and benevolence is felt in every part of the world.

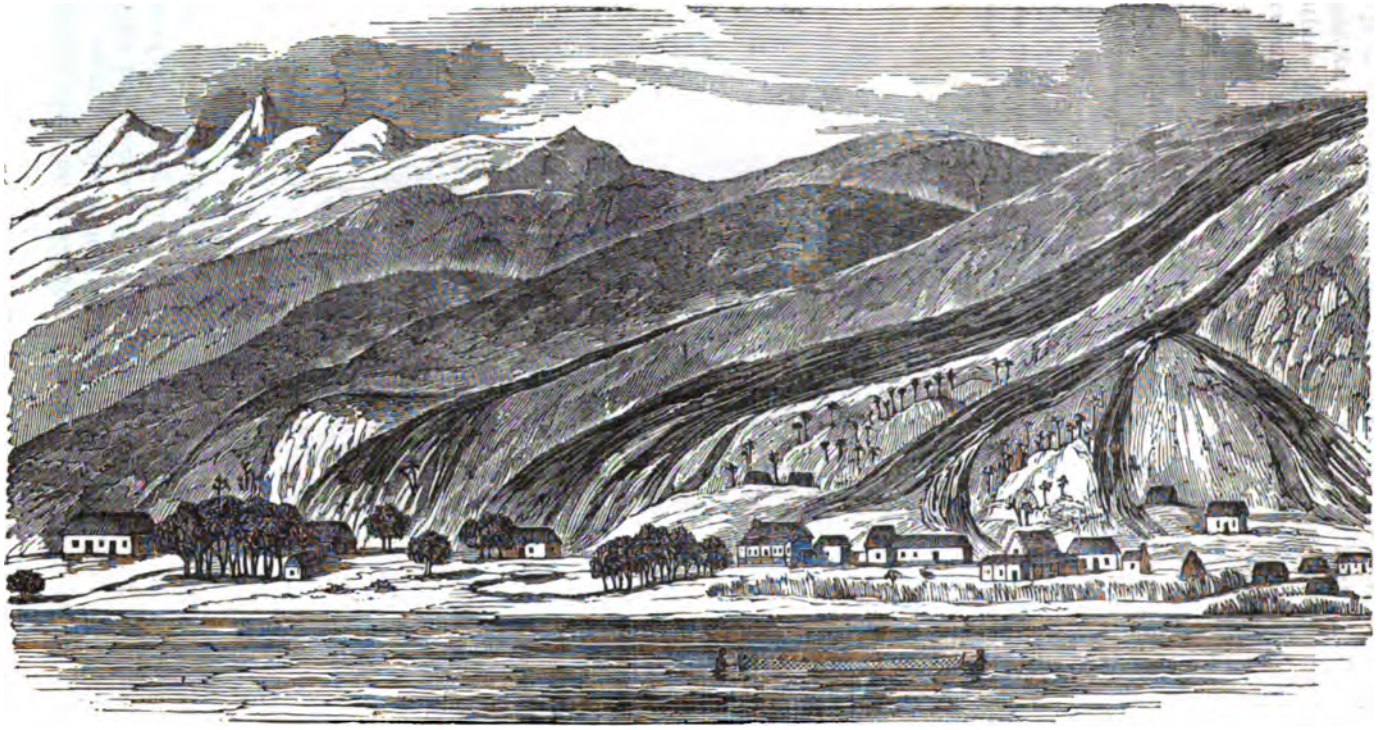
Do you ask who these people are? They are the descendants of the ancient Britons, who now inhabit the Island of Britain and these United States. Give the heathen the Bible, and it will do for them what it has done for us.

Administration of Justice at the Sandwich Islands.

In July last, the governor of Oahu sent a company of prisoners through the streets of Honolulu, escorted by a file of soldiers and attended by a crier, who called the attention of the populace by asking them if the conduct of the prisoners had been right. It appears that they had been apprehended for knocking out their teeth, tattooing themselves, and indulging other practices of heathenism; and the governor resorted to this method of punishing them. — *Polynesian.*

A Gooroo.

About twelve months ago, a great gooroo of the madhiva caste came to Cuddapah, a large town in the Madras presidency, to collect his disciples, impress them with the marks of his caste, and to fleece them of their money. His train consisted of twelve elephants, four camels, one hundred bullocks, fifty bandies, or carts, and about two hundred followers. He brought with him eight bullock-loads of idols, many of which are placed around a large room in which he resides. The practice of this great gooroo is to



Mountains of Lava and Missionary Station at Kalnaaha, Sandwich Islands.

burn his disciples, in different parts of their bodies, with five red-hot copper seals, which are the signs of the particular caste to which he belongs. His tutelar deity is the monkey-god, the image of which, together with some sacred stones, he places before him and worships. In order to be impressed with these holy

Huneman, the Monkey-God.

seals, his disciples who have situations under government must give three months' pay, and those who are otherwise employed must give, according to their means, some fifteen, others thirty, and others fifty dollars. One rich man, in Cuddapah, actually gave, for himself and wife, the sum of one thousand dollars for being burnt with these copper seals; and, besides this, made a great feast in honor of the gooroo, which cost him two hundred dollars. When the disciples of the great man approach his presence, they bring with them offerings of fruits, clothes, &c. The secretary of the gooroo then informs him who they are, and the purpose for which they have come. Afterwards, he receives their offerings, and orders his servants to seal them with the copper seals, made red-hot. During the time they are occupied in this

Presenting Offerings to a reputed Hindu Saint.

painful task, he repeats a muntrum, or prayer to his god. After this is done, his disciples wash his feet with water, in a silver dish, pay homage to them, and then place flowers upon them. The gooroo then repeats muntrums behind a curtain, and dismisses his disciples with his blessing, giving them at the same time some holy food and water. They receive this with an act of homage, and then retire to their homes, having been well burnt in their skins, and well fleeced of their money. Should any disciple refuse to give the money which the gooroo demands, he is tied up to a pillar, well flogged, and then put out of caste. If a man out of caste wants to be restored to its privileges, he has only to offer a certain sum of money to the gooroo, and, after performing certain ceremonies, he is replaced in his former dignity.

This great impostor rises at five in the morning; and, after bathing himself in cold water, he stamps his body in many places with the holy seals, not made red-hot, but rubbed with white clay. He then worships the monkey-god, after which he sits upon a stool, and relates some stories out of the pooranas, or sacred books of the Hindus. He then presents his disciples with some holy water and some sacred leaves, called *toolesee.* At noon he bathes again, worships the idol, and presents various offerings of rice, fruit, &c., to his followers. This is done to give the people an exalted idea of his charity. His food consists chiefly of boiled rice, mixed with sacred leaves, sugar, and ghee.

This is one of the many impostors that are continually rambling over the numerous provinces of Hindustan, endeavoring to seduce and destroy its ignorant and degraded inhabitants. How appropriately does the language of the great apostle of the Gentiles apply to these degraded people! "For ye suffer if a man bring you into bondage, if a man devour you, if a man take of you, if a man exalt himself, if a man smite you on the face." And how thankful should you feel to that gracious Redeemer, who, by his glorious gospel, has delivered you from such degrading superstitions and lying wonders!

Cost of Idolatry.

Rev. J. J. Writbrect says, "I once visited the rajah of Burdwan, and found him sitting in his treasury. Fifty bags of money, containing one thousand rupees in each, were placed before him.

'What,' said I, 'are you doing with all this money?' He replied, 'It is for my gods.' 'How do you mean that?' I rejoined. 'One part is sent to Benares, where I have two fine temples on the river-side, and many priests who pray for me; another part goes to Juggernaut; and a third, to Gaya.' Thus one native is spending one hundred and eleven thousand dollars annually, from his princely income, upon idols and Brahmins."

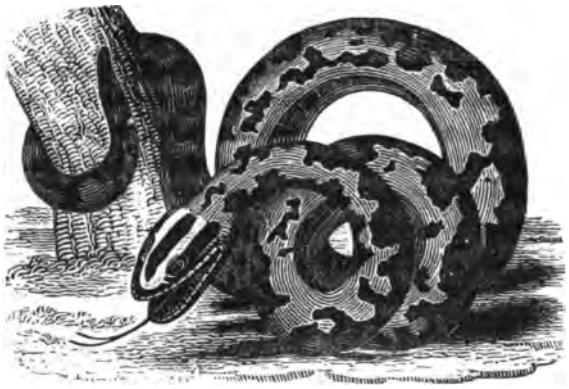
How long would it require a similar liberality, on the part of Christians, to extend the purifying and elevating influences of the gospel throughout the world?

Idols and Temples given up.

In many of the villages in Southern India, idolatry is becoming quite unpopular. The following is a communication from a missionary at Nazareth, in the Tinevelly district.

"The principal men and the whole village of Mavadepum, having signified their intention to embrace Christianity, requested me to visit them. On my arrival there, I was conducted to the river-side, where there were five temples belonging to the village. Here I found the people, and a great crowd beside, of heathen, of all classes, assembled under a large pupul-tree, adjoining one of the larger temples. I entered into conversation with those who had invited me, and soon discovered that the subject of their joining me in a body had been canvassed in the village, and that all were unanimous in begging me for a Christian teacher and schoolmaster. They promised, from that day forth, 'to renounce idolatry, to serve God only, and to learn the way of salvation.' They promised, also, one hundred rupees in money, and materials towards their future prayer-house, which is to be built in January; and begged I would assist them with one hundred and fifty rupees more, as they required a large place for their congregation which amounts to five hundred and two. I asked them what further test they were prepared to give of their sincerity and disinterestedness. Their reply was, 'Take our temples and dumb idols, which have ruined us.' I am sure no better test could have been given. Inquiry having been made for the keys, they were immediately brought and delivered into my hands. The temples were opened, and, although it was then midday, the interior was so dark that the idols could not be distinguished. With the help, however, of a torch, thirty-six idols, large and small, were brought out and thrown against each other with great violence, by which

several were broken; and, but for my checking them, not one would have been left whole. I took occasion to speak of the helplessness of idols, and the folly of such as put their trust in them. Some of the heathen were heard to say, 'We are not to blame. Our forefathers left us as a legacy such a religion; and the time will come when not only such temples, but even the Trichendore pagoda, will come into the possession of the missionaries. What is it to us? Where shall we then be?' The new converts were next directed to convey the idols to Nazareth; and, after a couple of days, their bandies brought them all away, and they are now heaped up in my compound."



Boa Constrictor.

Worship of Snakes.

The natives of Whydah (Africa) are very superstitious. The principal objects of their worship are snakes, which are held by them in great veneration. During my stay there, I visited the fetish temple, which is very different from the fetish temples on the Gold Coast. This temple is large enough to admit twenty persons at one time to go and worship the snakes, where they are always to be found. When I entered the temple, to my utter astonishment, I found not less than a dozen snakes, all coiled up, apparently very tame. Several of them I touched with my hands. They were from three to four feet long, and about as thick as a man's arm. This was the ordinary size of them; some were much larger, others smaller.

These snakes frequently come into the houses; and sometimes

they find their way on the bed. One night, while I was staying at Whydah, one of them came into the room where I was sleeping, and remained there till the morning. To kill one of them would be death, or a slave must be given to die in your stead, to be sacrificed to the fetish. Should one happen to die on any person's premises, the owner, whoever he might be, would have to bear the expense of a *custom*, which would be made for the dead snake; and, when one of them is found any where, the fetish-man must be sent for to carry it away to the temple. Before he will touch it, he will wash his hands in some kind of herb-tea, prepared for the purpose, and then mutter something over to himself; after which he will take the living reptile into his hands. His attendants, who are in general very numerous on these occasions, will fall on their knees, and put their faces on the ground; and, while they are in this position, the fetish-man will touch their backs with the snake; after which, he carries it to the fetish temple, and lodges it there. This ceremony I have seen performed in the English fort-yard at Whydah. Doubtless this is one reason why so many of these reptiles resort to this temple. If one is found any where, it is always taken there and fed. — *Rev. William Allen.*

Victims of African Superstition.

Mr. Bushnell states, in a recent letter, that considerable external reformation has taken place among the Gaboon people, and at times some seriousness is apparent. Their ancient belief, however, has a strong hold upon them. One article in their creed, which they are extremely reluctant to give up, is, that no individual dies without the intervention of human agency. Hence, when any one deceases, they say that some person has bewitched him. Mr. Bushnell mentions the following fact, in illustration of the prevalent opinion: "Some seven or eight months ago, a man was killed by lightning, in a thunder-storm, while fishing in a canoe. Last Sabbath morning, a person was accused of bewitching the deceased, or in some way causing the lightning to kill him. The poor victim was bound, therefore, placed in a canoe, taken out into the river, and drowned."

Rev. Elijah Johnson, writing from the missionary station at Garretson, says that, on entering a neighboring town, he saw an old woman sitting on the ground. She seemed at least a hundred years old. She asked him to give her something. A man

had died in the town, and they had made a palaver on this poor old woman, and said that she had "made witch" for the dead man, and had killed him. The day after he left there, they pounded up a quantity of sassay-wood, put three or four quarts of water to it, then, making the old woman hold her mouth open, they poured it down her throat. They then put a rope around her neck, dragged her out of the town, made a fire around her, and burned her up.

Matricide.

Whilst a missionary was addressing a congregation of Hindus by the side of a public road, in the environs of Calcutta, one of his hearers suddenly stopped him by a question which he insisted on having answered, and the following conversation ensued: —

Hindu. Sir, is it a sin for a man to kill his mother?

Missionary. Of course, a dreadful sin.

Hin. Then you are the man guilty of committing it.

Mis. How do you prove the truth of your accusation?

Hin. Why, sir, you drink the milk of the cow, and she is thus a mother to you; afterwards, you kill the cow, and eat her flesh.

Mis. Your premises are incorrect. I do not admit the cow to be my mother; for, if she were, I should have four legs and a tail, and I appeal to the whole congregation for the truth of what I affirm. But may I not recriminate, and ask, Are not many of you Hindus literally guilty of the dreadful crime you thus unjustly ascribe to me? for you know it is a practice in this country for children to burn their own mothers alive.

The objector slunk away, the hearers were pleased at the argument which silenced him, and the congregation at large took the closing reproof in perfect good temper.

Marriage of Hindu Widows.

Custom requires Hindu parents to procure husbands for their daughters before they arrive to womanhood. It is not uncommon for a girl to become a bride before she is three years old. Should the husband die even before she leaves the parental abode, the infant bride becomes a widow; and a widow, however juvenile or infantile, is doomed to remain such through life. A few years since, Babu Mutilal Seal, for the purpose of discountenancing this

pernicious custom, offered the generous sum of five thousand dollars to the first respectable Hindu who would brave the scorn and prejudice of his countrymen by marrying a widow; but no one has appeared as yet to claim the bounty. The same individual has recently proposed to the Dhurma Subha, a society of orthodox Hindus, to petition government for some enactment in favor of the marriage of widows. This step, however, created a great commotion in the meeting.

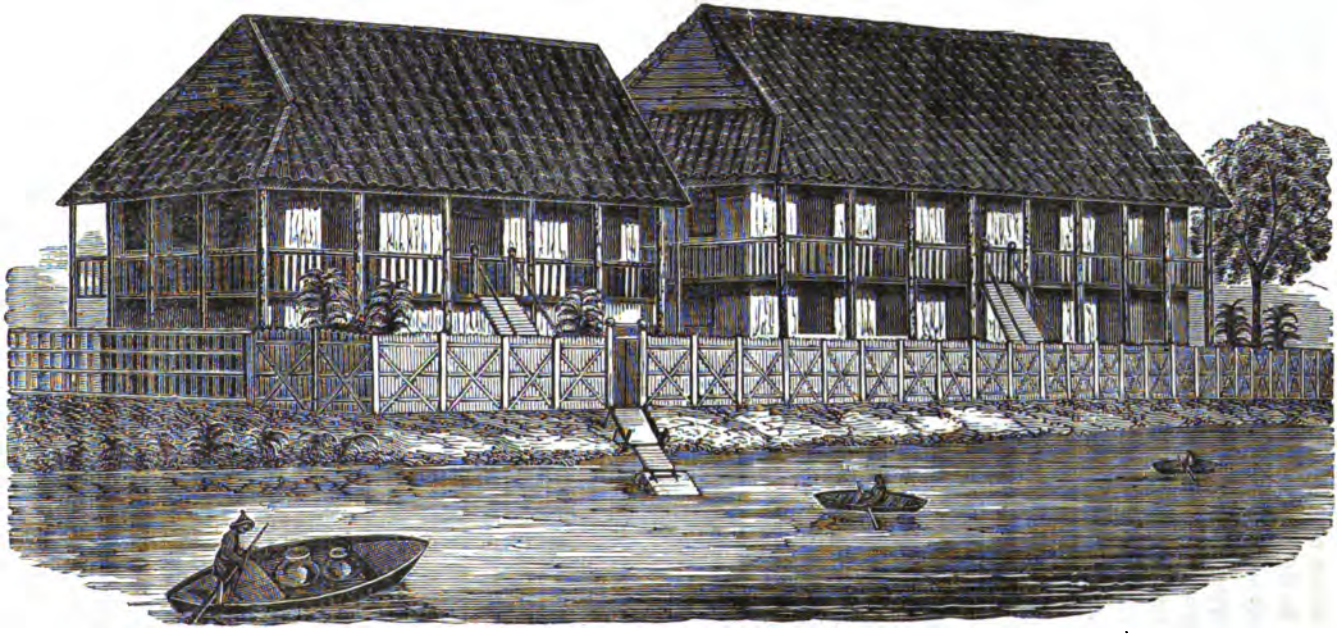
Great Image of Budh at Bankok, Siam.

In the middle of the temple which the king of Siam is building, there is a large, solid platform, four feet high from the marble floor. This has its sides, a part of the distance from the top down, thickly set with little pieces of glazed ware, in imitation of shell-work, and which, when done, are to be gilded and fancifully painted.

On this platform is the great image of the reclining god. This image represents Gaudama, or Budh, as he is interchangeably called, lying down at full length, resting his head in his hand, on his elbow. As he thus lies, his head nearly touches the ceiling above, a distance from the platform on which his elbow rests of full forty-six or forty-eight feet.

His body, or, if you please, his height, is fifty-one paces, or one hundred and fifty-three feet, reckoning three feet to the pace. Through, from the pit of the stomach to the back, as near as I could calculate, it was thirteen feet. Across the breast, from shoulder to shoulder, it is about nineteen feet. The arms, at the root, are four and a half feet thick. His hips are about seven feet through; and his legs above the ankles, I think, about three feet through.

From his heels to the end of his toes is sixteen feet. The soles of his feet are not yet completed, though nearly so. They are covered with flowers, elephants, kings and queens in full dress, fictitious serpents, pleasure halls, and two circles, nearly two feet in diameter, which are expressive of the limits of power. *These are all made of the most beautiful and the purest mother-of-pearl.* The entire image, except the soles of the feet, is to be covered with pure gold. — *Extract of a Letter from William P. Buell, dated Bankok, Siam, Oct.* 7, 1843.



Houses near Bankok, in Siam.

A Hindu Song.

In Lecture second, page 75, is a description of the dancing girls. The following is one of the songs, which, at religious festivals, they sing for the amusement of the idols and their worshippers. The boy mentioned in the first line is Krishna, the favorite divinity, who married sixteen thousand wives. He is believed to have been born of human parents, at Brindabun, on the Ganges, where he spent his youthful days in playing on the flute, and frolicking with the milkmaids.

"The pipe is heard of Nundh's sweet boy —
The milkmaids' hearts beat high with joy;
To the cool woods in crowds they speed;
No danger fear, nor toil, they heed;
And, if by chance the youth they spy,
Away go prudence, modesty.
They gaze, by his bright beauties burned,
And soon their pails are overturned!"

They then go to Jasooda, (Krishna's mother,) and make the following complaint: —

"Jasooda! listen to our prayer;
Thy son's audacious frolics hear!
To Brindabun we bent our way;
He seized our arms and bade us stay.
Lady! our cheeks with shame were red;
Like modest girls, away we fled.
In vain we've milked, in vain we've churned,
For he our pails has overturned!"

Jasooda replies, —

"Go, bold and forward milkmaids, go!
No one your wily ways can know;
Often in laughing groups you're seen
Bending your steps to coverts green;
There in the cool retreats you rove,
And pass the hours in mirth and love;
Then tell me, from your pranks returned,
Forsooth, your pails are overturned!"

Extract from one of the Plays performed at Religious Festivals.

KRISHNA.

Again, my fair one! — hast thou purchased me?

MILKMAID.

Think'st thou uncalled I boldly come? Ah, see! —
The gathering clouds, dear youth, invite to love.

KRISHNA.

How could a frame so soft such dangers brave?
While e'en thy pretty self was lost in night
How see thy way?

MILKMAID.

The lightning gleamed so bright.

KRISHNA.

O'er broken roads, through mire and tangling thorn —
Thy tender limbs must ache, thy feet be torn.

MILKMAID.

Steps light and firm will weariest way o'ercome.

KRISHNA.

Yet dark 's the night, and thou wert all alone.

MILKMAID.

No, my soul's lord! for Love was with me still,
Pointed my path and warded every ill.

From the Oriental Christian Spectator of July, 1838.

One of the Speculations of the Honorable East India Company.

"An image, called *Mahadeo*, stands in a village situated on the banks of the Neeva, to which pilgrims, on their way to a shrine of greater celebrity, generally present such trifling offerings as dates, betel-nuts, cowries, or a handful of grain. The time for making these offerings lasts nine days. The proceeds are divided between the government and the officers of the village. Government annually disposes, by public auction, of the right to collect its share of the offerings. In 1836, they received six rupees * and four annas, and in 1835, four rupees and five annas."

Extract of a Memorial to the East India Company.

"The identification of the government with the idolatry of the country is so complete, that the endowments of the temples are taken under the fiscal management of the collector of revenue in each district. Public officers are retained in several provinces, whose sole and especial duty it is to see that all the services to the idols in the district are duly performed, the different attendants at their posts, the vessels, temples,† &c., &c. kept in repair, and to

* A rupee is about fifty cents, and an anna is a sixteenth of a rupee.

† Twenty thousand dollars were expended, by the English, in repairing the wall of a temple at Seringham, and the work was superintended by a European engineer in the company's service.

report to the European officer, the collector at the head of the province. They take no step without reference to that officer, and, in all cases, resort to him for orders. In the large temples a special officer is employed, whose duty it is to superintend the particular temple."

Curious official Documents of the East India Company.

"To the acting principal collector at Coimbatoor. From the Thasildar Palachy.

"At the temple of Kalandai, Perial, employed as a dancing girl, [lewd woman of the temple,] died; and, on the seventh of last September, I sent to Hoozoor, for permission to appoint her daughter as a dancing girl. Having now appointed her, I send her to the presence, [collector,] and wait for the collector's orders as to taking the customary securities, &c., from her."

Translation of an Order issued by the English Magistrate of Canara, in 1833, directing special Ceremonies for Rain to be performed in certain Temples of that District.

"1. Communications have been received from the revenue officers of some districts, stating that, from deficiency of rain, the cultivation is hindered, and requesting permission to perform purjunyum, [ceremonies in the temples for rain.] Upon looking upon the rain reports, it appears that it is so. It is therefore ordered, for the protection of the ryots, [farmers,] that they must go to the temples of their villages with cocoa-nuts, cocoa-nut water, &c., and with poojah [worship to the idol] must offer up their prayers. In the temples for the maintenance of which there is an allowance from government, you must order the officiating priest to perform poojah properly with prayers.

"2. If the ryots and respectable people say that purjunyum is required, if it appear to you that the distress is really true, and if it appears necessary that purjunyum should be performed, you are to take thirty-five rupees from the amount of collections, and give them to the Kundre Devanah Devasthan, and, having performed purjunyum properly, you are to report to me the coming of rain."

An approaching Crisis.

Bishop Wilson, of Calcutta, has lately expressed the following opinion as to the present aspect of Hinduism: —

"Unquestionably a crisis seems approaching, in India, with

rapid strides. Education has been going on for fifty years; all offices, up to a certain class, are thrown open to Hindu talent and character; the native mind is bursting out with knowledge; Commerce is opening her riches; Medicine is following the steps of Western science; railroads are about to accelerate internal communication; the present governor-general is full of enlightened zeal for native improvement; the invention and application of steam-vessels is rendering Calcutta a suburb, as it were, of London.

"In such a moment, Christianity must sanctify the process, or inordinate luxury and selfishness will blight the gifts of God. Christianity must 'stand upon the watch, and set herself upon the tower,' to seize every favorable opportunity as it arises; for at any moment a sudden downfall of Eastern idolatry and superstition may take place, and then, if we are ready to enter in, India may quickly be the Lord's."

A Brahmin's Views of Christianity.

At a village in Southern India belonging to a respectable Brahmin, a small number of families applied to a catechist for instruction. The Brahmin, hearing of it, assembled the whole of the villagers, and addressed them as follows: "I hear that some of you have determined to learn the Christian Vedas. Now I do not want any divisions or quarrels in my village. There shall not be two parties here. Therefore, all of you remain in your old religion, or else all of you in a body join the new. If you like to embrace Christianity, do so: I will make no opposition. You may turn your temple into a prayer-house, if you like: only, all be of the same mind." All the inhabitants of the village, nearly two hundred in number, decided in favor of Christianity; placed themselves under instruction; demolished their idols, valued at two hundred rupees; and delivered up their devil temple to become a temple of the living God."

Another.

"A wealthy Brahmin in Benares gave up his son into the hands of one of the missionaries with these words: 'I feel convinced, sir, after reading your Holy Shasters, that they contain the true religion. I have not the power to come up to the purity of its precepts; but here is my son — take him as your child, feed him at your table, and bring him up a Christian.'

ADVENTURE WITH A SERPENT.

A CORRESPONDENT of the Madras Herald gives the following account of an adventure with a cobra di capello, which occurred to a gentleman who was reposing under a bannian-tree alone, after a day of shooting: —

"I was aroused by the furious baying of my dogs: on turning round I beheld a snake, of the cobra di capello species, directing its course to a point that would approximate very close upon my position. In an instant I was upon my feet. The instant the reptile became aware of my presence, in nautical phraseology, it boldly brought to, with expanded hood, eyes sparkling, neck beautifully arched, the head raised nearly two feet from the ground, and oscillating from side to side, in a manner plainly indicative of a resentful foe. I seized a short bamboo, left by one of the bearers, and hurled it at my opponent's head. I was fortunate enough to hit it beneath the eye. The reptile immediately fell from its imposing attitude, and lay apparently lifeless. Without a moment's reflection, I seized it a little below the head, hauled it beneath the shelter of a tree, and very coolly sat down to examine the mouth for the poisoned fangs, of which naturalists speak so much. While in the act of forcing the mouth open with a stalk, I felt the head sliding through my hand, and, to my utter astonishment, became aware that I now had to contend against the most deadly of reptiles in its full strength and vigor. Indeed, I was in a moment convinced of it; for as I tightened my hold of the throat, its body became wreathed round my neck and arm I had raised myself from a sitting posture to one knee; my right arm, to enable me to exert my strength, was extended. I must, in such an attitude, have appeared horrified enough to represent a deity in the Hindu mythology, such as we so often see rudely emblazoned on the portals of their native temples. It now be-

came a matter of self-defence. To retain my hold, it required my utmost strength to prevent the head from escaping, as my neck became a purchase for the animal to pull upon. If the reader is aware of the universal dread in which the cobra di capello is held throughout India, and the almost instant death which invariably follows its bite, he will, in some degree, be able to imagine what my feelings were at that moment; a shudder, a faint kind of disgusting sickness, pervaded my whole frame, as I felt the cold, clammy fold of the reptile's body tightening round my neck. To attempt any delineation of my sensations, would be absurd and futile; let it suffice, they were most horrible. I had now almost resolved to resign my hold. Had I done so, this tale would never have been written, as no doubt the head would have been brought to the extreme circumvolution to inflict its deadly wound. Even in the agony of such a moment, I could picture to myself the fierce glowing of the eyes, and the intimidating expansion of the hood, ere it fastened its venomous and fatal hold upon my face or neck. To hold it much longer would be impossible. Immediately beneath my grasp there was an inward working and creeping of the skin, which seemed to be assisted by the very firmness with which I held it; — my hand was gloved. Finding, in defiance of all my efforts, that my hand was each instant forced closer to my face, I was anxiously considering how to act in this horrible dilemma, when an idea struck me that, were it in my power to transfix the mouth with some sharp instrument, it would prevent the reptile from using its fangs, should it escape my hold of it. My gun lay at my feet; the ramrod appeared the very thing required, which, with some difficulty, I succeeded in drawing out, having only one hand disengaged. My right arm was now trembling from over-exertion, my hold becoming less firm, when I happily succeeded in passing the rod through the lower jaw up to its centre. It was not without considerable hesitation that I suddenly let go my hold of the throat, and seized the rod in both hands; at the same time bringing them over my head with a sudden jerk, disengaged the fold from my neck, which had latterly become almost tight enough to produce strangulation. There was then little difficulty in freeing my right arm, and ultimately throwing the reptile from me to the earth, where it continued to twist and writhe itself into a thousand contortions of rage and agony. To run to a neighboring stream to lave my neck, hands, and face in its cooling waters, was my first act after despatching my formidable enemy."

The Bannian Tree.

"Branching so broad and long, that in the ground
The bending twigs take root; and daughters grow
About the mother tree; a pillared shade,
High overarched, with echoing walks between."

Milton.

Sitting in Dherna.

"Among the customs of the Hindus, there is one which is called *Dherna*. If a man demands satisfaction from his neighbor for some grievous offence, — if a creditor determines to pursue extreme measures with his debtor, to obtain what is due to him, — if a relative has been cheated by another out of his patrimony or his rights, and wishes to exact them from him, — they respectively take the poniard or a cup of poison in their hand, and, knowing that the offending party is at home, they sit down at his door, in dherna. That moment the defendant within is considered as under arrest. He cannot touch food, so long as his accuser continues to fast; and, should he not come to terms, but drive, by his obstinacy, the plaintiff to despair, and allow him to use the dagger or drink the poison, his blood rests upon his head. This may be termed their *ordeal* — their mode of demanding satisfaction — their system of duelling — their *dernier resort*.

"At the village of Pannabaka, in the presidency of Madras, there was a priestly Brahmin, who had lately come from Bellary, and had undertaken to attend upon the idol of the place. His was the privilege to levy contributions on the inhabitants for his sup-

port. A householder, who had for a time given him a halfpenny a day, refused to continue his allowance; and, though the priest insisted upon the payment, he remained inflexible. The priest then threatened that, unless he received the amount, he would cut out his own tongue, and the householder would have to answer for giving him such a provocation. Incensed at the obstinacy of his opponent, he whetted his knife and cut off the tip of his tongue. He bled profusely, and his tongue swelled to a prodigious size. The pains which he endured only served to render him more desperate, and he declared he would bring his whole family and sit in dherna, till he should obtain a sum sufficient to make a feast to his god. The householder was not to be intimidated, and remained as obstinate as the Brahmin. The priest, his wife, and his four sons, sat down, and kept their position at the door of the defendant; but, during the second night, the female was bit by a snake, and died in the morning. This event exasperated the priest; he increased his demand; and, as the village had remained neutral in the affair, he now laid a tax upon all its inhabitants. As he had not only sustained a personal injury, but had lost his wife while standing up for the rights of his order, and for the honor of his god, nothing less would satisfy him now, than a sum adequate to meet the expenses of the funeral and to make a feast to propitiate the deity who was offended by such daring sacrilege. Till these demands were met, he resolved to keep his station, and to retain the corpse of his wife unburied at the door of the house. As the people of the village rejected his claim, he then threatened that, in order to be avenged upon them, he would first kill his four children, and then put an end to his own existence. It was the act of a Brahmin; it might be viewed by Hindus as a pardonable offence; it was done in honor of his god; it was occasioned by the obstinacy of the people; it was a sacrifice that, according to a monstrous mythology, would meet with a future and a bountiful reward; its helpless victims were to be raised to life again by the divinity whose honor it was done to vindicate. But it is not ours to make apologies; we have only to record the fact, that this priest — this worshipper of Shiva — this monster — this raging fury — took his knife, laid hold of three of his children, and severed their heads from their bodies. It was not enough! His eldest son tried to make his escape; but this murderous father allured him back, and promised that, prior to his own self-destruction, he only wished to embrace him and bid him farewell. Thus invited back by the soft whispers of love, he returned; but,

the moment that he came within the grasp of the murderer, he laid him prostrate, as another victim at the shrine of superstition and revenge. His attempt to despatch himself ended in making a dreadful wound in the back of his neck.

"Such, it may be said, are only solitary instances. It would not be right to quote such deeds to bring opprobrium upon a whole people, any more than it would be just to appeal to the horrid murders in Christian countries as a specimen of our own customs. But the cases are utterly dissimilar. The inhabitants of Pannabaka stood by and saw the horrid deed performed; they seemed, afterwards, to be amused and highly delighted at the bravery of the act; they expressed their resentment at one individual, and at the police-officer, who called upon them to interfere to prevent it; and there can be no question that, if this priest had been restored to his liberty and his horrid altar again, they would have received him with enthusiasm, and revered him as a saint of superior sanctity. In a village some miles distant from the spot, the people no sooner heard of this murder, than they left their employment and proceeded to Pannabaka with every demonstration of joy; and, after a few days, they returned, saying, 'The children are not indeed restored to life; but why are they not? It is entirely owing to the inhabitants, who have not made a feast,' which would cost two thousand rupees, to propitiate the favor of the god — a feast which the priest had declared to be necessary." — *Rev. William Campbell, Missionary to India.*

On a certain occasion, the Bhats of Marwar demanded a favor of Umra I., and, being refused, determined to sit in dherna. They assembled, with their women and children, in the court of the royal palace, and, with their daggers, commenced a horrid butchery. Eighty of their number lay weltering in their blood. See *Annals and Antiquities of Rajast'han*, Vol. II. p. 703.

Kidnapping a Boy to be sacrificed to Kali.

The following is an extract from an official document containing the confession of one of the kidnappers: —

"My name is Buhktea. I am an inhabitant of the Jeyntea territory. Oochmug Rungant Koor sent us three prisoners to seize a man for the purpose of offering him up as a sacrifice at the shrine of the goddess Kali. We therefore seized the prosecutor, Munoo; but he screamed out for assistance, when the people of the village assembled and apprehended us. I never before seized

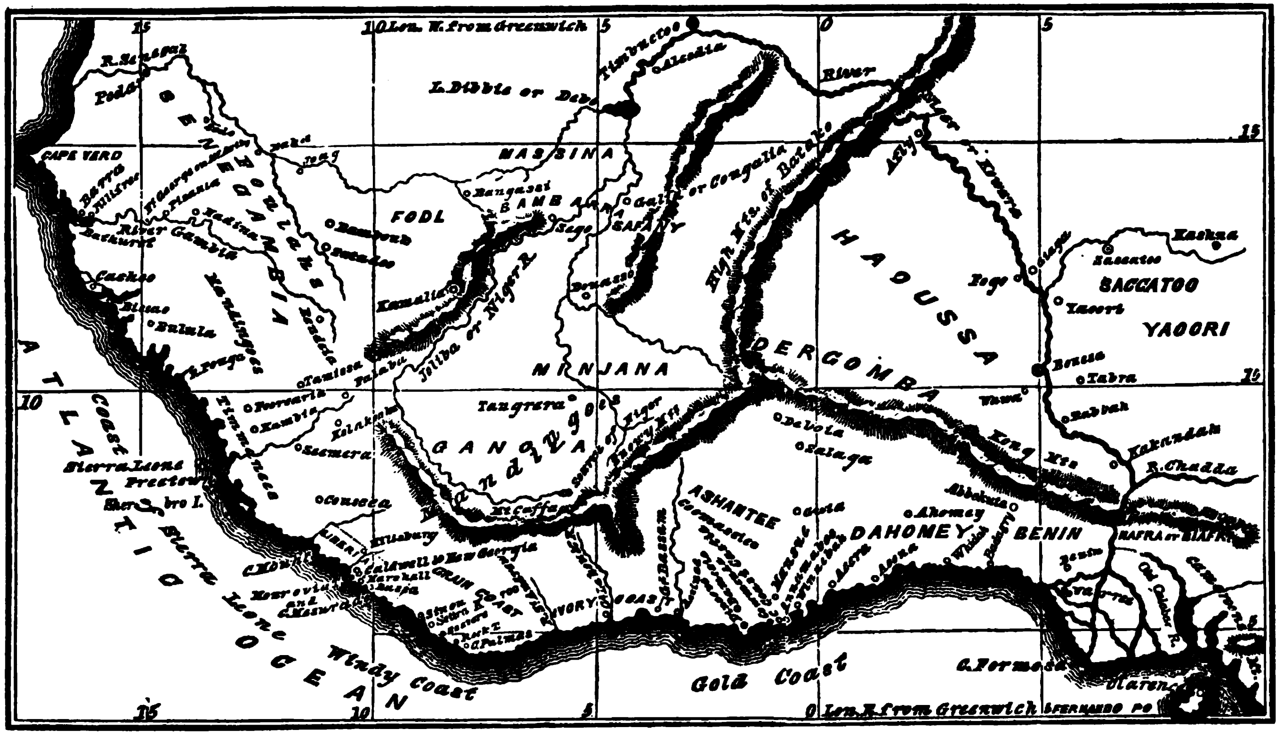
any other individual. We are the Koor's subjects, and dare not disobey his orders, but have no hope of remuneration from him. It was our intention to gag our victim with the balls of cloth produced in court. I have witnessed human sacrifices. The Koor offers them up every year — has for the last ten years — ever since he married the Rajah's sister. I cannot say exactly how many victims are offered up annually, but the sacrifice continues for four months. It is performed in secrecy. The victim is made to sit down, and, after being adorned with garlands of flowers, the throat is severed with a sacrificial knife. I have heard, though I never saw it, that the wife of the Koor bathes in the blood of the victims. She is always present at the sacrifices. The rite is performed with a view to procure progeny."

The confessions of the other two prisoners were similar to the above. The judge of circuit observed that, "This atrocious practice on the part of the people of Jeyntea, although rumored and credited, was never before so clearly ascertained by facts. The emphatic appellation of *khojghur* (kidnapper) is generally known in this district; and though persons have been, at various times, missing, on the borders, yet their disappearance has been commonly attributed to destruction by wild beasts."

Breaking an Idol.

"I have with me," says the Rev. J. Warren, "a Brahmin who has been a devotee. A yearning after some satisfactory knowledge of, and communion with, the Deity, had caused him to undergo many bodily mortifications, to perform many ceremonies, to make pilgrimages to many celebrated shrines, and to worship almost every thing, and in almost every possible way. He came at last to Burdwan, and was told by a spiritual quack that his *thakoor* was very powerful, and, if he would make certain offerings, and watch and pray before the idol with certain forms, something satisfactory should be revealed to him. Poor Hurree had been cheated and disappointed so many times, that he was nearly faithless; but he determined to try the experiment. He did all that was prescribed, and it completely failed. He was told to add more prayers and vigils, which he did without effect. He was told to *scold* the god for his inattention, and set about it early in the morning. He reproached him, argued with him, threatened him with personal indignity, and with exposure of his inefficiency; but all to no purpose. He reproached him on account of his stu-

pid and absurd looks, (and you should see Hurree's imitation of the posture and countenance of the thakoor;) but it all did no good; the idol was immovable in his silence. Hurree told him, 'If you are angry, resent my abuse; if you are pleased, help me; if you are any thing, let me see you do something; do good or evil; don't sit here looking so like a fool; if you do not stir, or speak, or do something, I will knock you over.' And he did so; he took a large fragment of a broken idol, and, throwing it with all his strength, dashed the senseless thakoor from his pedestal to the ground, breaking him in many pieces. The people immediately assembled, and would have used violence, had not Hurree been rescued by the police. The priests put the fragments of the idol into a basket, and carried it to the English magistrate, insisting that Hurree should be instantly examined on a charge of murder. The magistrate heard them; Hurree admitted the facts, and gave his explanations. The magistrate stuffed his handkerchief into his mouth, and, as gravely as possible, examined the fragments of stone, deciding that English law could not convict Hurree of murder, as there was neither blood nor bones in the basket. He then ordered the police to see that no one injured Hurree, and dismissed him, telling him, privately, that his decision as to the powers of the idol was quite correct."



Lon. W. from Greenwich
Lon. E. from Greenwich
ATLANTIC OCEAN
Gold Coast
Windy Coast
Coast
CAPE VERD
R. Senegal
SENEGAMBIA
River Gambia
Bathurst
Cashao
Bulula
Mandingoes
FODL
MASSINA
BAMBARA
SAFANY
Sego
Bammakoo
Kamalia
Jaliba or Niger R.
L. Dibbie or Debo
Timbuctoo
River
High Mts. of Batako
HAOUSSA
DERGOMBA
MINJANA
Tangrera
Kong Mts.
ASHANTEE
Coomassie
Salaga
DAHOMEY
Abomey
Abbekuta
BENIN
BAGGATOO
YAOORI
Yaoori
Kashna
Tabra
Rabbah
R. Chadda
Kakundah
Accra
Whidah
Badagry
Old Calabar R.
C. Formosa
Sierra Leone
Freetown
Sherbro I.
Timmanees
LIBERIA
Monrovia
GRAIN COAST
IVORY COAST
C. Palmas
FERNANDO PO

Cape Palmas.

Rocktown, a native village, about eight miles north of Cape Palmas.

SUPERSTITIONS OF THE ASHANTEES.

The objects of religious worship, in Ashantee, are fetishes. They are regarded as spiritual beings, though said to be of different sexes and to require food. They are supposed to reside in certain mountains, rivers, trees, brute animals, reptiles, and insects, and by ceremonies performed by the priests may be made to take up their residence in images of various kinds, or in bits of wood, glass, paper, &c. It is supposed that they not unfrequently render themselves visible to mortals. The great fetish of the rock, on which Cape Coast Castle stands, is said to come forth in the night in human form, but of superhuman size, and to proceed through the town, dressed in white, to chase away evil spirits. The Ashantees, and also the inhabitants of the adjacent countries, believe in the existence of the devil, and, in August, annually drive him out of their towns. At Cape Coast Town, preparation is made for the ceremony in the course of the day. As the hour of eight o'clock in the evening draws nigh, the people are seen collecting in groups in the streets, armed with sticks, muskets, and other weapons; at the instant the eight o'clock gun is fired from the castle, a tremendous shouting, accompanied with the firing of muskets, breaks forth from all parts of the town; and the people rush into their houses, and beat about with their sticks in every corner, shouting and hallooing with all their strength. When it is imagined that the devil is excluded from all the houses, a simultaneous rush is made out of the town, and the people in a body pursue the invisible enemy, with lighted flambeaux, shouts, and the firing of muskets, until it is concluded that he is completely routed and put to flight. After this achievement, they return; and, in some of the towns, the women proceed to wash and purify their wooden and earthen vessels, to prevent the devil from returning to their houses.

The priests and priestesses of the national superstition — the

fetish-men and fetish-women — constitute a numerous order. One class are attached to the public fetish-houses or temples. At the temple of the principal fetish of the Ahanta country, upwards of fifty superior priests are said to reside.

Another class of fetish-men itinerate through the country, remaining six or twelve months at a place, according as their services may be in demand by the inhabitants.

The revenue of the fetish-men is derived from the liberality of the people. A moiety of the offerings which are presented to the fetish belongs to the priests; and this is very considerable in amount. The king of Ashantee's offering is said to be generally ten ounces of gold, and that of his subjects in proportion to their respective ranks.

The influence of the fetish-men rests upon the universally-received principle, that evils can only be removed, and desired benefits conferred, by the fetishes; and that their friendly interposition must be sought through the medium of their servants or ministers. This doctrine, it will be perceived, puts the people entirely into the power of the priesthood, and wholly abandons them as victims to its rapacity.

To keep up the delusion, and maintain their influence, the fetish-men have recourse to a variety of means. They exert themselves to obtain all kinds of information. With this view, they employ agents in various parts of the country, who make them acquainted with all that is passing within the range of their observation. The fetish-men themselves, also, when on their travels, industriously collect the news; and, when one of them enters a town to practise his profession, his first business is, to shut himself up for a few days, until he ascertains by secret inquiries what subjects are engaging the public attention, who are sick, and what is the private history of the principal inhabitants. They thus acquire an amount of information which astonishes their dupes, and strengthens the popular belief in their supernatural powers.

The success of the fetish-men is further promoted by their acting in concert. They communicate to each other the information they respectively collect, and agree upon the line of operations which they shall pursue. A short time since, a person residing at a croom, or village, in the neighborhood of Salt Pond, was hunting in a very secluded part of the bush, when he came upon a company of about twenty fetish-men, who had retired thither to lay their plans for promoting the interests of their craft at the

public expense. He listened for some time to their conversation, unperceived, and might probably have kept their secret, had not his superstitious fears been partly dissipated by the influence of the gospel.

The fetish-men apply themselves to the study of medicine; and the knowledge which they acquire of the properties of herbs and plants contributes to strengthen their influence with the people.

Application is made to the fetishes for counsel and aid in every domestic and public emergency. When persons find occasion to consult a private fetish-man, they take a present of rum and gold-dust, and proceed to his house. He receives the present, and either puts a little of the rum on the head of every image, or pours a small quantity upon the ground before the platform, as an offering to the whole pantheon; then taking a brass pan with water in it, he sits down with the pan between himself and the fetishes; and the inquirers also seat themselves to await the result. Having made these preparatory arrangements, looking earnestly into the water, he begins to snap his fingers, and, addressing the fetish, extols his power, telling him that people have arrived to consult him, and requesting him to come and give the desired answer. After a time he is wrought up, like Virgil's Sibyl, into a state of fury; he shakes violently, and foams at the mouth. This is to intimate that the fetish has come upon him, and that he himself is no longer the speaker, but the fetish, who uses his mouth and speaks by him. He now growls like a tiger, and asks the people if they have brought rum, requiring them, at the same time, to present it to him. He drinks, and then inquires why they have come, and for what purpose they have sent for him. If a relative is ill, they reply that such a member of their family is sick; that they have tried all the means they could devise to restore him, but without success; and that, knowing he is a great fetish, they have come to ask his aid, and beg him to teach them what they should do. He then speaks kindly to them, expresses a hope that he shall be able to help them, and says, "I go up to see." It is imagined that the fetish then quits the priest; and, after a silence of a few minutes, he is supposed to return, and give his response to the inquiry.

But what is this "going up to see"? The people believe that the fetish has four eyes, and conclude that therefore he can see better than mortals, who have only two; and some understand that the fetish goes up to the sky to look around for the cause of

the disease, and for the cure. But the fetish-men themselves, when arguing with William De Graft in defence of their system, have insisted that the fetish goes up to Yankumpon, the Supreme Being; and they have urged this as a reason for refusing to embrace Christianity. Their argument has been, "As the fetishes derive all their power and wisdom from God, why forsake them?" Latterly, however, as they perceive that the people, under the teaching of the missionaries, are disposed to reject this mode of reasoning, and go to God at once, the priests do not appear to admit so freely the dependence of their deities upon a higher power.

When a principal chief is ill, or when any public calamity has taken place, the inhabitants of the town repair to the public temple, or fetish-house, to propitiate the fetish, who is supposed to be angry because his offerings have not been duly presented; and who has therefore either himself appointed the afflictive visitation, or has allowed some evil spirit to inflict it upon them. The illness of the chief, however, is shrewdly traced up by the priests to his neglect of the prescribed customs for a departed relative, or some other similar offence.

On these occasions, the drums belonging to the temple are brought forth. These are made of large calabashes, one end being cut off, and covered with goat-skin. The persons who play them sit upon the ground under the shade of the grove, and beat them with their hands. All things being ready, the priest selects and commences a fetish-song, which the people sing, while they beat the drums, and the attendant fetish-men dance with all their might. While thus engaged, the priests are often excited into a state of frenzy, which is regarded as evidence that the fetish has entered into them; and at the end of the song the fetish is supposed to speak in the priest, and give intimations of his will to the people. Previous to his beginning to speak, the priest lays his hand upon the drums, and silence ensues. Having ended his communication, he commences another song, and the former scene is renewed. After a length of time, perhaps when fatigued, the priest dances very slowly, and delivers his oracles to the people as he passes softly by them. On some of these occasions he will rush out of the circle, and run into the house of a principal person, to tell him what to do in order to avert some evil which he foresees is coming upon the family; and for such intimations he does not fail to receive the usual present.

Some of the fetish-houses are built in a conical form, with long

sticks or poles placed in the ground, tied together at the top, and thatched. When a fetish dance takes place before one of these, a priest places himself at the entrance, to prevent the people from looking in. They are told that, when the fetish comes down to his temple, they will see it move. And verily they do. As the drumming, singing, and dancing proceed, the temple begins to rock backward and forward, which the people are led to believe is effected by the fetish, who has descended, and is dancing upon the temple. This deception is managed by a fetish-man, who, before the people come together, places himself on a cross-seat in the building, near the top, where he is able to shake with ease the whole fabric. The stationing of another fetish-man before the door is to prevent the people from discovering the true cause of the phenomenon which they witness.

Sometimes the town-fetish does not wait to be consulted, but summons the inhabitants to his temple. On such occasions, the priests profess that the fetish has come upon them. They run about the town like frantic persons, eating raw eggs, using the most extravagant gestures, and telling the people that the fetish has a communication to make to them. Then the inhabitants take the accustomed presents, and hasten to the fetish-house; and the usual scene of drumming, singing, and dancing is enacted.

In cases of great difficulty, the oracle at Abrah is the last resort of the Fantees. This has always been held in the highest estimation. Previous to the Ashantee (As-hánti) war, there was in the neighborhood a deep and almost impervious dell, inhabited by a number of aged fetish-men, whom the people believed to be immortal, and to have lived there beyond all memory, in intimate converse with the fetish, and with the departed spirits of the aged and the wise. Adoko, the chief of the Braffoes, frequently consulted them, either in his own person, or through his head fetish-man; and the Fantees afterwards attributed the success of the Ashantees, and their own defeats and misfortunes, to their disregard of the injunctions of the oracle. Abrah is now in ruins; but the fetish maintains his reputation; partly by the influence of the fetish-men in the country, who advise the people to go thither in cases of great emergency, and partly by means of the information conveyed to Abrah by the agents of the oracle. Frequently, when inquirers go from a distance, they are surprised to find that the fetish-men are already acquainted with many of their own private affairs; and it often happens that, on the strength of the secret information which they have obtained, the priests send

such messages to persons living in remote places as tend to cherish and confirm the popular impression, that they possess supernatural means of obtaining knowledge. The people throughout the country would be afraid, were they disposed, to speak disrespectfully of the Abrah fetish; for they believe that he would hear them, catch them up into the sky, and make them drawers of water, or would inflict upon them some other severe punishment.

This celebrated oracle is always consulted at night. During the day no person is allowed to enter the sacred thicket from which the response is given. Any of the natives rambling within the precincts of the enclosure would be severely fined; and, if a European were seen approaching, the fetish-men would endeavor to dissuade him from entering it. When the inquirers arrive, they find a large fire made upon the ground; and the presents which they have brought they place in the hands of the priests in attendance. But sometimes they are told that they shall have the honor of giving them to the fetish himself. They are then directed to elevate their presents above their heads, and to fix their eyes steadfastly upon the ground; for, should they look up, the fetish, it is said, would inflict blindness upon them for their sacrilegious gaze. Who or what it is, in the overhanging branches of the trees, that receives the presents, will be readily conjectured. The visitants are then instructed to sit down, and look into the fire, without turning their heads aside, or speaking to each other; and two or three priests go round the company, and receive their applications. After a time the oracle gives a response, in a small, shrill voice, intended to convey the idea that it proceeds from an unearthly source.

All possible precautions are used to inspire the people with awe and fear, to deter them from visiting this oracle from motives of mere curiosity. It is inculcated that, should an unbeliever in the fetish enter the enclosure, he would be immediately discovered, and summarily punished. The fate of one irreverent visitant is dwelt upon with great solemnity. It is stated, that when he arrived, and sat down by the fire, a chain came down from the thicket, and dragged him up to the skies, where he is now employed in drawing up water from the sea, which the fetishes send back to the earth, in answer to the applications made to them for rain.

It has already been remarked that fetish-men and women acquire sufficient knowledge of the medicinal properties of herbs and

plants to enable them to cure many diseases. This knowledge is artfully employed to foster the public superstition. In administering the medicine, they invariably tell the patient that its healing properties were not discovered by themselves, and that they merely prepare it according to the prescription of the fetish. During the healing process many fetish rites are observed, to render the medicine more efficacious, and to counteract the influence of evil spirits. If the malady of the patient does not appear to yield to such applications, the fetish is again consulted; and, in some cases, as a further expedient, the priest takes a fowl or a cat, and ties it to a stick, and squeezes it to death. The stick is then placed in the path leading to the house, for the purpose of preventing evil spirits from approaching it. When the patient is known to be a rich man, a present of gold-dust is required, and sheep are directed to be offered. Mr. Bowdich states that, during the illness of his native guide at Coomassie, (Kumási,) several sheep were sacrificed, and that he was fetished until the last moment, and died amidst the howls of a number of old fetish-women, who continued to besmear with eggs, and other ingredients, the walls, door-posts, and every thing about him, until he had ceased to breathe. The sickness of persons of the highest order is frequently attended with more serious consequences than the slaughter of sheep and fowls. During the illness of Osai Tutu Quamina, it is stated that young virgins were regularly sacrificed to the fetish on certain days in the week, for the recovery of his health.

For the purpose of fortifying the applicant against any apprehended evil, some kind of fetish preparation is made, which he is directed to wear about his person; and, should it fail to accomplish the desired object, the blame is invariably thrown upon the wearer. It is alleged that he has neglected some necessary condition, or in some way or other offended the fetish; and the fetish-man escapes without censure. However greatly the predictions of the priests may be falsified by the event, or whatever may be the failure of the measures to which they resort, their own credit is maintained with the people. The case of the fetish-man at Gaboon will serve for the purpose of illustration. This individual, who declared himself to be invulnerable, was solicited by a credulous young man to endue him with the same miraculous quality. The request, enforced by a handsome present, was favorably entertained by the fetish-man; and the applicant having been duly fortified by the performance of the requisite

superstitious rites, confidently exposed himself to the fire of a musket. His arm was shattered by the ball; but the fetish-man adroitly threw all the blame of the miscarriage upon the wounded dupe. He stated, that at the moment when the gun was discharged, it was revealed to him by the fetish that the young man had, on a former occasion, violated one of the fetish regulations. The sufferer was not prepared to maintain that he was faultless; and the people continued to regard the fetish-man with undiminished veneration.

The measures prescribed to insure success in war afford a striking proof of the direful influence exerted by the national superstitions. When the king of Ashantee was about to engage in the Gaman war, he was employed in religious preparations during a period of several weeks. Not only in the capital, but at several other places, he presented fetish offerings in furtherance of the undertaking. According to the account of those transactions which Dupuis received from a native, it appears that the monarch, in the first instance, collected together his priests, and proceeded to consult the gods by a succession of human sacrifices. After fifty persons — thirty-two males and eighteen females — had perished, the royal council decided that the answers returned by the priests were unsatisfactory. The king was then directed to make a custom at the sepulchres of his ancestors; and when the blood of many hundreds of human victims had been shed, the priests announced that the wrath of the adverse deities was appeased, and that they were at length disposed to favor the arms of the king. A certain composition was then prepared by the priests, which they delivered to the king, with a strict injunction to burn it daily in a consecrated fire-pot within the palace. On no account was the fire to become extinct in consequence of neglect; for, so long as the sacred flame should continue to destroy the composition, the king, it was alleged, would not fail to triumph over his enemies.

Encouraged by the assurances which he received, the king prepared to join his army, and committed to his eldest sister, at that time the governess of the empire, or queen of the females, the task of watching over the sacred mystery; informing her that both his crown and his life depended upon her vigilance. To assist her, he selected three of his favorite wives, who were to attend by turns, and prevent the fire from being extinguished. To this trust, however, the sister proved unfaithful. After the king had been some time absent, she formed a connection with a chief of

Bouromy, whose ambition led him to aspire to the throne of Ashantee. Seventeen of the king's wives, and their families, are said to have joined in the conspiracy; when the mysterious flame was extinguished, the fire-pot was broken to pieces, and the rebellious chief openly began to arm his followers in maintenance of his claims.

With this state of things, the king, it was believed, became acquainted by supernatural means. Surprised at the severe checks which he received in the early part of the war, he caused an incantation to be performed over a certain talisman, for the purpose of ascertaining why the results of the campaign proved so contrary to those which he had been encouraged to expect; when he is said to have obtained an insight into what was going on in his own capital. The fetish-men who were with him in the camp had doubtless received private information from Coomassie, which they communicated to the king as though it had been revealed by the oracle. The sequel may be briefly stated. The king immediately despatched Ossu Kujoh, with a body of troops, who speedily and effectually crushed the rebellion. When the king himself returned victorious at the end of the war, he summoned a council to deliberate upon the punishment to be inflicted upon the offenders; and it was finally decreed that the offending wives should suffer death by decapitation; but, to avoid the profanation of spilling royal blood, the sister of the king was ordered to be strangled, (her younger sister being elevated to her office of governess of the females,) and her paramour, and all his party, were doomed to undergo the most cruel deaths, at the grave of the king's mother. By the execution of these sentences, which were promptly carried into effect, it is said, seven hundred individuals perished.

In their preparations for war, the Ashantees have recourse to the Moors who visit or reside at the capital, as well as to their own fetish-men. Enormous prices are sometimes paid for the fetishes, or charms, manufactured by those followers of the prophet. The king, it is stated, gave for the fetish or war-coat of Apóko the value of thirty-seven slaves; and he paid according to the same scale for the war-dresses of several other chiefs, varied only with respect to the rank which they respectively sustained. For a small fetish, consisting of six lines of writing, enclosed in red cloth only, which the king presented to Mr. Bowdich's linguist, he gave six ackies of gold. Sometimes the fetish is cased in gold instead of cloth. A single sheet of writing-paper

is sufficient for a great number of charms, as a very small slip only will contain a mystical sentence.

To these cabalistic preparations the most extraordinary virtues are ascribed. The Ashantees firmly believe that they greatly contribute to make them invulnerable in war; that they paralyze the hand and shiver the weapons of the enemy, and divert the course of the balls. Several of the Ashantee captains seriously offered to allow Mr. Bowdich to fire at them; and such is the confidence which the warriors of that nation generally repose in these mystical defences, that they rush fearlessly into the midst of the greatest dangers. In the praises of one of the great captains, proclaimed on a public occasion by the bards, this was the climax of the song: "He is invulnerable; his fetish no man can look upon and live."

In the course of a war, the Ashantees use additional means to fortify themselves against evil, and to obtain fresh inspirations of vigor and courage. Several of the hearts of the slain enemy are taken out by the fetish-men who attend the army; and, having been cut to pieces, are mixed with blood and various consecrated herbs, while the accustomed ceremonies and incantations are performed. All who have never before killed an enemy eat of the preparation; it being believed that, if they did not, their energy would be secretly wasted by the haunting spirits of their deceased foes. The smaller joints, bones, and teeth of the most distinguished among the slain, are worn by the victors about their persons. Such was the end of the unfortunate Sir Charles M'Carthy. His heart was eaten, and his bones were worn as fetishes, or charms, by his savage conquerors.

The national divinities are supposed to be as willing to assist an individual in injuring his neighbors as in averting evils from himself and his family. If a revengeful or malicious design is formed, recourse is had to the fetish, for the purpose of carrying it into effect. During Mr. Hutchinson's stay at Coomassie, a person was executed for an attempt upon the life of his brother, who was a caboceer, or nobleman. The criminal was presumptive heir to the property, and his object was to obtain possession of it by the removal of his brother. To effect this, however, he did not use any personal violence, but only employed the fetish incantations which are resorted to for such purposes.

The great religious customs, which are to be classed among the darkest features of the national superstitions, yet remain for consideration. The immolation of prisoners taken in war is one

of those revolting practices; for it is presented to our notice, not as the effect of the ungovernable passions of the conquerors, breaking loose from the restraints and obligations of religion, but as an expression of pious zeal and devotion. It results from the principle recognized by the king of Ashantee in these words: "The fetish makes war for strong men, because they can then pay plenty of gold, and proper sacrifice." To obtain a supply of victims for their altars, is thus a principal end for which the national deities are supposed to promote war; and the sacrifice of their prisoners, consequently, becomes a religious obligation on the part of the people. Dreadful are the scenes of barbarity which are exhibited after a victorious campaign. After the Gaman war, full two thousand prisoners were destroyed, by the most refined tortures, over the royal death-stool in Coomassie, in honor of the fetish, and of the shades of departed kings and heroes; and at the commencement of the war which brought the Ashantees into hostile collision with the British, when the Asins were overthrown near the Prah, the horrid work of sacrificing the prisoners went on at the little temple on the banks of the river, by night as well as by day, until thousands had perished. In the national songs which celebrated the latter victory, the principle which requires the sacrifice of prisoners was distinctly recognized; and the bards exultingly sang that "a river of perjured blood flowed from Miasa to the Prah, and *propitiated the wrath of the river-god.*"

In Fantee, (Fánti,) the preparations for a funeral commence by washing the corpse, arraying him in his best garments, and adorning him with his trinkets and beads. He is then laid on a sofa, in a room the walls of which are covered, either wholly or in part, with red cloth. A silk umbrella is fastened to the wall over the head of the corpse, and a table is placed near it, covered with viands and wine for the use of the departed spirit. The family then commence a loud wailing, which attracts the neighbors to the house.

Every party of relatives or friends, coming from a distance to join in the custom, bring a suitable present, and are accompanied with drums and muskets. On their arrival, they give their presents to the individual having the charge or direction of the funeral, who is usually one of the principal persons of the family of the deceased. They then fire their muskets, and begin to beat their drums. The director of the funeral custom takes a regular account of the presents received, that a similar compliment may

be returned when the head of the family of the donors may be removed by death.

After a few days, the dead person is buried in his own house, or, if he be a young man, in the house of his father; and on the principle that individuals assume in another world the state which they maintained in this, the head of a family is interred in his best clothes and ornaments; gold-dust is also put into his grave; and sheep and cattle, at least, are slain on the occasion. Drumming, firing, dancing, wailings, shoutings, and other extravagant proceedings, take place when the soil is thrown upon the corpse; and food and drink are placed upon the grave.

If the deceased was rich, the custom is continued, perhaps for a month, until the family are nearly reduced to want; as they are obliged to support all the parties who attend the funeral from a distance, so long as they remain. A funeral is usually absolute ruin to a poor family. Whether they can afford it or not, the custom must be observed; and the survivors are obliged to find money to meet the expenses. The practice of persons borrowing money of others, and engaging to remunerate the lender by their future services, (a practice which cannot be regarded without suspicion, as liable to great abuse,) is very much promoted by funeral customs. Many poor persons, on the death of the head of their family, have been obliged to become "pawns" to others, to obtain sufficient money to meet the unavoidable expense.

The funeral custom is renewed at the end of twelve months, when sheep and cattle are killed in honor of the deceased. Every year, after this, a little rum and food is placed upon the grave by the relatives; and even if the house has gone to decay, or has been pulled down, they will not fail to repair to the spot with the accustomed annual offering.

The natives believe that their deceased relatives eat and drink, live in the same state, and engage in the same pursuits as when they were in this world. This belief exerts a powerful influence upon the mind, and leads to the most tragic results. If their relatives are to resume in another world the state they maintained in this, then it is deemed necessary to send after them their wives and attendants; and thus the death of an individual becomes the signal for the murder of his household.

Until recently, human sacrifices were publicly offered at funeral customs in the immediate neighborhood of the coast. Bosman mentions one at which he witnessed the sacrifice of eleven persons, among whom was an individual who, having endured

exquisite torture, was delivered up to a child of six years of age, by whom his head was, after much difficulty, finally sawed from his body. Meredith states, that, in the year 1800, when a king of Apollonia died, one or two human beings were sacrificed every Saturday, until the great custom took place, which did not happen until six months after his decease; when upwards of fifty persons were sacrificed, and two of his youngest wives were put alive with his corpse into the grave, wherein was deposited a considerable quantity of gold, and several rich cloths. The lid of the coffin was covered with human blood, on which gold-dust was sprinkled. And Dupuis says that he has known many victims sacrificed, in the last few years, within gun-shot of the castles. He mentions the case of two men and two women, who were butchered under the very walls of the fort at Accra; and adds, that at Tantum, Apollonia, Dix Cove, Succondee, and Chamah, the same class of murders was perpetrated with impunity. In a recent letter, the Rev. Mr. Brooking mentions that a person had just perished under the sacrificial knife at Dutch Accra. Since the Ashantee invasions, the power of the Fantees has been so greatly broken, and their numbers are so much reduced, that the British government, to which they are obliged to look for protection, has been enabled to put down these inhuman practices within the sphere of its immediate influence.

In the independent states in the interior, the funeral customs of the rich and great exhibit spectacles of the most horrifying barbarity. In some cases many of the wives, and in others a great number of slaves, are, on these occasions, sent after the deceased, to enable him to maintain his proper rank in another world. When a king of Dahomy dies, a dreadful scene takes place in the palace. The wives of the deceased monarch begin to break and destroy his ornaments, and every thing valuable belonging to themselves, and then to kill each other. When Adahunzun died, two hundred and eighty of his wives thus perished, before his successor could arrive at the palace and put a stop to the carnage; and, at the funeral of the deceased king, all these victims were buried in the same grave, with six of the remaining living wives.

In Ashantee, when a person of distinction dies, the slaves immediately rush out of the house, to hide themselves in the bush; as a slave or two are instantly sacrificed, to attend upon the spirit of the deceased until the custom shall take place. It has been stated that the king of Ashantee, in his last battle with the British, at Dodowah, whenever it was announced to him that any of his

captains had been killed, immediately caused slaves to be immolated to accompany them into the other world.

When Mr. Bowdich was at Coomassie, he had the opportunity of witnessing a funeral custom for the mother of one of the principal caboceers, (noblemen or chiefs;) and he states that, as soon as she had breathed her last, the king, her son, and another of the nobles, each sacrificed a young girl, that the deceased might not be altogether without attendants, until the custom should take place. The relatives and adherents of the family then presented contributions of gold, powder, rum, and cloth, to be expended at the funeral; but the king, as the heir of all his subjects, sent a larger present than any other, except the nearest relative, who succeeded to the stool and the slaves. He also sent a sum of gold, and some valuable cloths, to be buried with the deceased.

On the day of the funeral, an extraordinary scene presented itself. Walking out about noon, Mr. Bowdich and his friends saw the vultures hovering over two headless trunks, scarcely cold; and were passed by several troops of women, from fifty to a hundred each, who danced along in a movement resembling skaiting, lauding and bewailing the deceased in the most dismal strains. Other women carried on their heads rich cloths and silks, and other valuables which had belonged to her. All these women were profusely daubed with red earth, in barbarous imitation of those who had succeeded in besmearing themselves with the blood of the victims. The rush of the crowd was most tumultuous; and horns, drums, and muskets, yells, groans, and screechings, were heard in every direction. Now and then a victim was hurried along at full speed, by persons, the savage delight of whose countenances gave them a fiendlike appearance; and the chiefs and captains arrived in rapid succession, their approach being announced by the peculiar flourishes of their horns, and the firing of muskets. Soon the king's arrival in the marketplace was made known; and the crowd rolled impetuously towards it; but the sabres of the soldiers, which were freely used, hewed a way for the procession. The son of the deceased led the van, dancing from side to side like a bacchanal, and appearing as though he was intoxicated with the adulatory praises which were bellowed forth by his attendants. He looked upon the victims, who had large knives passed through their cheeks, with a savage joy, bordering on frenzy; while they regarded him with indifference or apathy. The other chiefs and captains, adorned in all the splendor of their fetish dresses, followed in the train.

On arriving at the market-place, Mr. Bowdich saw the king seated with his usual attendants and state-display. Thirteen victims, surrounded by their executioners, in black shaggy caps and vests, were pressed together by the crowd at his left hand. The troops of women already described, paraded on the outside of the circle, vociferated the dirge; and the utmost powers of the horns and drums were called forth. A discharge of musketry then took place near the king, which spread round the circle, and was continued without intermission for an hour. The soldiers kept their stations; but the chiefs, after firing their muskets, bounded once round the area with the gesture and extravagant behavior of maniacs, followed by their sycophants, who waved flags over their heads and roared forth their "strong names." The head fetish-woman of the family was at the same time observed rushing through the ranks as the muskets were fired, and screaming as though in the greatest agonies. The firing having somewhat subsided, rum and palm-wine were copiously drunk; and the principal females of the family, many of whom were described as being very handsome, came forward to dance.

Presents of sheep and rum having been exchanged between the king and the son of the deceased, the drums announced the sacrifice of the victims, who were visited successively by all the chiefs. The executioners struggled with each other for the bloody office, and the victims looked on with apparent indifference. At length, an executioner, snatching a sword, lopped off the right hand of one of the victims, who was then thrown down, and his head was sawed, rather than cut, from the body. The remaining twelve were, in like manner, mangled and butchered upon the spot; and others, principally females, were provided, to be sacrificed in the bush where the body was interred. Slaves, however, are not the only victims on such occasions; for it is usual to "wet the grave" with the blood of at least one respectable freeman. The heads of all the slaves who have perished having been placed in the grave, several of the retainers of the family are called in a hurry to assist in lowering the coffin; when, just as it touches the heads which pave the bottom of the grave, one of the freemen is stunned by a violent blow, a deep gash is cut in the back part of his neck, he is rolled in upon the body, and the grave is instantly filled.

After this, the firing, drinking, singing, and dancing were kept up during several days; and it was understood that, had not the approaching war with Gaman enforced the necessity of economiz-

ing powder, there would have been eight great customs for the deceased, instead of this one; at the last of which the king himself would have fired. On the last day of the custom, all the females connected with the family paraded round the town, singing a grateful acknowledgment of the services of those who had assisted at the custom.

The funeral customs for kings and members of the royal family are conducted on a scale corresponding with the rank of the deceased. The okras, — who are slaves peculiarly devoted to the king, and distinguished by a large circle of gold suspended from the neck, — amounting in number to more than a hundred, and also many women, are sacrificed on the tomb of the king. When Osai Quamina died, the funeral custom was repeated every week for three months, two hundred slaves being sacrificed, and twenty-five barrels of powder being fired on each occasion; but when the king's brother died, during the invasion of Fantee, the king devoted three thousand victims, two thousand of whom were Fantee prisoners, and nearly one thousand more were furnished by various towns; making, in the whole, about four thousand human beings who perished at the grave of this royal personage.

When the king dies, Ashantee is, in fact, one vast Aceldama; for all the customs which have been made for deceased subjects during his reign, must be repeated by their families, simultaneously with the custom which is celebrated for the departed monarch. During the first two or three days after the death of the king, scarcely any one is safe; for the relatives of the king, rushing forth with their muskets, carry havoc and death around; and few persons, even of the highest rank, dare to leave their homes. The funeral customs of the kings of Ashantee are frequently repeated; and Bantama, the royal sepulchre, is, from time to time, made to reek with the blood of newly-slain victims.

The annual yam custom furnishes another exhibition of the true character of the national superstitions. It is celebrated when the yam is ready for use; and is intended as a public acknowledgment, on the part of the people, of the kindness of the fetishes in preserving them through another year.

In Fantee, all the inhabitants of the towns assemble under the shade of the grove adjoining the fetish house or temple, when a sheep or some fowls are killed, part of the flesh of which is mixed with boiled yams and palm-oil, and a portion of this mixture being placed upon the heads of the images, the remainder is thrown about before the temple, as a heave-offering to the deities

When the heave-offering has been presented, the fetish-men receive from the people the offerings of rum which they have brought; and, after placing a little upon the heads of the images, and pouring out a small quantity upon the ground before the temple, they invite all the fetishes to come and partake of it, saying, "When people eat, they need to drink also." The remainder of the sheep and fowls are made into a soup, of which no persons but the priests and priestesses are allowed to eat; but the people partake of the residue of the rum. When the priests have finished their repast, the people begin to beat the drums, and sing fetish songs, to which the priests dance; and the festivity is often prolonged throughout the night.

The celebration of the yam custom at Winnebah is attended with one peculiarity. The principal fetish at that place, it is believed, will not be satisfied with sheep, but he must have a deer brought alive to his temple, and there sacrificed. Accordingly, on the day the custom is to be celebrated, almost the whole of the inhabitants, except the aged and infirm, go out into the adjoining country, which, studded with clumps of trees and bushes, has a park-like appearance; and, while the women and children look on, the men strike the thicket with sticks, beat drums, and halloo with all their might. While thus engaged, sometimes a leopard or panther starts forth; but it is usually so frightened with the noise and confusion, that it scampers off in one direction as fast as the people run from it in another. When a deer rushes out, the chase begins, and the people attempt to run it down. At length, it is tumbled upon the ground by the sticks which are thrown at its legs, when the people seize it, and exultingly carry it to the town, with shouting and drumming. On entering, they are met by the aged persons with staves; and, having gone in procession round the town, they proceed to the fetish house, where the animal is sacrificed, and partly offered to the fetish, and partly eaten by the priests. The catching of the deer is described as an animated scene; and European gentlemen not unfrequently go from Annamaboe to witness it. In 1839, the people succeeded in catching two deer, which were both offered to the fetish.

The yam custom is continued during several days; and is followed or closed by what the English have termed the *Black-Christmas*, when the people put on their best clothes, and visit each other. On entering the house, they shake hands with all the inmates, congratulating them, and wishing they may live to

see another year. On this occasion, the chiefs bring out their large umbrellas, and all make the best display which their circumstances will afford. In about three weeks after this, the ceremony of turning the devil out of the towns takes place, and the people conclude that they have then made a promising commencement of the year.

At the time of the yam custom in Ashantee, there is a great national assembly in the capital. All the caboceers, and the tributary sovereigns, or their representatives, are required to be present, except those who have been sent to a distance on urgent public business; and it is at this annual festival that suspected chiefs are usually placed upon their trial. During the whole of the festival, the greatest licentiousness and immorality prevail, and both sexes abandon themselves to their passions without restraint.

At one of these festivals witnessed by Mr. Bowdich, every caboceer, as he arrived, sacrificed a slave at the city gate; and, in the procession of the first day, all the heads of the kings and caboceers who had been conquered, from the reign of Osai Tutu down to that time, with those who had been executed for rebellion, were carried by two parties of executioners, each consisting of upwards of a hundred individuals. In the skulls were inserted sprigs of thyme, to prevent the spirits of the deceased from troubling the king; and, as the bearers of those horrid trophies passed along in an impassioned dance, they clashed their knives upon the skulls either with the most frightful gestures, or with an expression of indescribable irony and ridicule. The festivity was kept up during the greater part of the night; and on the following morning, which happened to be the Christian Sabbath, the king ordered a large quantity of rum to be poured into brass pans, for the use of the people, in various parts of the town. A most beastly scene resulted; for, in less than an hour, excepting the principal men, not a sober individual was to be seen.* Towards the evening, another splendid procession took place. The third day was chiefly occupied with state-palavers; and, on the day after, the assembly broke up, and the caboceers took their leave.

In the course of these proceedings, about one hundred persons were killed at various places in the capital. Several slaves were

* The Ashantees procure their rum of *Christians* in exchange for *slaves*. The rum which made so many of these heathens drunk on the *Christian Sabbath* was doubtless brought to them by a *nominal Christian*.

also sacrificed at the royal sepulchre of Bantama, over the enormous brass pan which is used there for sacrificial purposes; and the streaming blood of the victims was mingled with various vegetable and animal matter, partly fresh and partly putrefied, for the purpose of making the most powerful fetish preparation. All the chiefs, likewise, killed several slaves, and caused their blood to flow into the holes from which the new yams were taken; and those who could not afford to kill slaves, took the head of one already sacrificed, and placed it upon the hole.

In the interior, time is divided into periods of three weeks, and the first of the three is regarded as the good week, and is called *Adai*. The Ashantees honor its return by a religious festival, termed *the Adai custom;* and this is distinguished again as *great* or *little*, for reasons which have not been fully ascertained. The great and the little customs, however, appear to alternate with regularity, so that one of each is celebrated every three weeks. At the setting of the sun on the evening previous to the custom, the great death-drum, which stands at the gate of the palace, is struck with much force; the royal household shout, and their exclamations are echoed by the people throughout the capital. Music and firing are continued through the night; and on the next morning, the king proceeds to the fetish house, opposite the palace, and offers in sacrifice several sheep, whose blood is poured on the golden stool, which is regarded as the palladium of the kingdom. There is then a numerous assemblage of all ranks in the palace-yard. A great display takes place; and it has been calculated, that the king, on every such occasion, makes presents to the superior captains and others, amounting in value to the sum of four hundred pounds sterling.

This custom, also, is frequently accompanied by scenes most revolting to humanity. Mr. Hutchinson remarks, that the greatest sacrifice of human life which took place while he resided at Coomassie, occurred on the eve of the little Adai custom. He had a friendly caution given him respecting it, from a quarter which he did not feel himself at liberty to name. "Christian," said his kind monitor, "take care and watch over your family: the angel of death has drawn his sword, and will strike on the neck of many Ashantees. When the drum is struck on Adai eve, it will be the death-signal of many. Shun the king, if you can; but fear not." As the time approached to beat the drum and Mr. Hutchinson sat meditating on the horrors of the ensuing night, he

suddenly received a message to attend the king. This was a somewhat startling summons, as obnoxious caboceers are frequently thus sent for on such occasions, ostensibly to talk a palaver, but, on entering the palace, they are seized and led to execution. Mr. Hutchinson, however, waited upon the king; and, while he remained with him, the officers appointed to attend the sacrifices came in with their knives, and other weapons of destruction.

The design of this sacrifice was, to propitiate the fetish, and secure its assistance in the approaching war with Buntuku. The bones of the king's mother and sisters were, in the first place, taken out of their coffins, and bathed in rum and water; and, after having been wiped with silks, they were rolled in gold-dust, and wrapped in strings of rock-gold, aggry-beads, and other most costly materials. Those persons against whom the king had any cause of complaint were then sent for in succession, and immolated as they entered, that "their blood might water the graves" of the royal personages, whose bones had been exhumed. During the whole of the night, the king's executioners traversed the city, and all whom they met were dragged away for execution; but the intended massacre having by some means become known, the king was disappointed in securing so few of the distinguished individuals who had been marked out as victims. Next morning, desolation seemed to reign over the capital, and no persons appeared in the market-place but the king and his attendants. When the day closed, the human sacrifices were again renewed; and during the night, the bones of the royal deceased were removed to the sacred tomb at Bantama, accompanied by a splendid procession. The chiefs and their attendants were all habited in their military costume; the stools, and all the ornaments used on great occasions, were borne by the proper officers; the human victims, in chains, with their hands tied behind them, preceded the bones; while at intervals, the chanting of the war-song indicated the eagerness which prevailed to march against the enemy. When the procession returned, on the following day, the king proceeded to the market-place. His horns sounded the well-known "wow, wow, wow," interpreted, "death, death, death;" and the work of sacrifice was at once resumed. The king sat with a goblet of palm-wine in his hand, and, every time the executioners cut off a head, he imitated a dancing motion in his chair. The terrors of the day ended when the king returned to his palace; and the chiefs, issuing from their places of

concealment, paraded the streets, rejoicing that they had, for that time, escaped death.

A similar description is given of the little Adai custom, by Dupuis. The city, he remarks, exhibited the most deplorable solitude; and the few human beings who were courageous enough to show themselves in the streets fled at the approach of a captain, and barricaded their doors, to avoid being shot or dragged to sacrifice. The doleful cries of the women vibrated from various parts of the city; and the death-horns and drums seemed to stupefy the obnoxious prisoners and foreign slaves with terror, as clearly indicating the dangers to which they were exposed. The second day of the custom exhibited a similar train of horrors; and human blood again flowed in torrents, at the dictate of this sanguinary superstition.

It would be an easy task to enlarge this horrifying picture. The religious customs of the neighboring country of Dahomy, — whose barbarous monarch paves the approaches to his residence, and ornaments the battlements of his palace, with the skulls of his victims, — and the gigantic fetish-tree at Badagry, — the wide-spreading branches of which are laden with human carcasses and limbs, — would alone furnish abundant matter for amplification. But further research is unnecessary. The reader will now be able to form a tolerably correct estimate of the nature and tendency of the popular superstition. The range of its influence is almost without limit. It holds its votaries in a state of perpetual thraldom. They cannot eat or drink without recognizing its authority. They cannot cultivate their ground, undertake a journey, enter into any negotiation, or engage in any business, but in obedience to its requirements. The practice of medicine, and the administration of justice, being under its control, it regulates the proceedings in all questions affecting property, and life and health.

The baneful effect which such a system must have upon public morals especially demands attention. What, indeed, must be the morals of a people where unchastity in unmarried women is no disgrace; where prostitution is even regarded as a virtue; where the priesthood is employed in promoting and concealing the intrigues of faithless wives; and where religion sanctions instead of discountenancing crime, and even lends the aid of its influence to him who cherishes injurious intentions against the property and life of another!

A careful examination of the national religion unfolds the true source of the barbarous practices which so extensively prevail.

Were nothing known of the superstitions of the people, it might remain a matter of doubt whether, in the wholesale butchery of their enemies, they were not merely indulging their own savage instincts, like the wild beasts of the forest. In the absence of information on that subject, the interpretation of the following passages from Dupuis would be attended with difficulty.

"The wars of the king," says the writer, "were shortly after introduced as a subject of general discussion. That of Gaman was the favorite subject; and the king occasionally took up the thread of the narrative, or elucidated such events as were perhaps not generally known. As he caused the linguists to interpret to me the particular feats of himself, the king of Banna, and Apóko, his eyes sparkled with fiery animation; and, at one period, he threw himself into a sort of theatrical attitude, which appeared to be unpremeditated and unaffected. He then seemed to be wrapped up within himself in delightful cogitations; and, at this crisis, some of the auditors, like the bards of olden time, rose to the hum of the war-song, and recited their parts in a pleasing, mellifluous strain. The king enjoyed the scene in ecstasy, and frequently motioned with his body and feet, in cadence with the metre of the verse. This reverie and the recitation occupied many minutes, and were ultimately succeeded by irony and satire cast upon the memory of his fallen enemy. 'His skull was broken,' said the king; 'but I would not lose the trophy, and now I have made a similar skull of gold. This is for my great customs, that all the people may know I am the king.'

"A slave was deputed to one of the apartments of the palace; and, as he returned, he deposited a chair, which his majesty said was the regal seat of Dinkara. This piece of workmanship was studded all over with gold and silver ornaments, and silver coin of different European states. The slave again disappeared, and returned, bringing under his escort a son of that unfortunate monarch, one of the few male survivors of the race of Dinkara. A pallid hue, if so it may be termed, overspread the jetty features of the youth, as he bowed trembling before the king. The angry glance which marked his reception excited the most painful apprehensions; and the countenance of the young man spoke woful agony, as he endeavored to scan the purport of the summons.

"'Your father,' said the king, addressing himself to the prince, 'was a rebel. He was full of pride, and wanted to be a great

king. He forgot when he was my slave. Is not this true? Then he wanted Sarem to help him, and sent gold to make friends. Is not that true, too? He forgot I was his master. He killed my sword-bearers, and sent me an insulting message. Now I have his skull, and the jaw-bones of his captains. His wives, and you, and all the people, are my slaves; and, when I tell you to die, you shall die as your brother did; but now you shall serve me.'

"The king then desired him to strip off his robe, and show me the wounds he had received in battle. The unhappy youth did as he was instructed, pointing to five or six honorable scars upon his breast, arms, and thighs, which had the appearance of gun-shot wounds. 'Now,' said the king to him, with a stern, sarcastic apathy, 'you know your father was a fool, and that I am the king; you did not know that before; and so now go home until I send for you again.'"

It is added that this unfortunate youth had been compelled, in the presence of the king, to join a chorus in the cruel *epicedium*, or "death-song," which preceded his brother's sacrifice — an execution which was performed in his presence, with torture, and amidst the mockery and derision of the whole court.

The inquiry naturally arises, on what principle could such a character as that described in the preceding quotations be formed? What had produced the feeling which, from its settledness and malignity, indicated the demon rather than the man, and made the monarch appear as the very personification of infernal revenge? Was he remarkable for his natural ferocity and savageness of disposition? The reverse was the case. He was polite and affable in his general manners; and especially characterized by his tender and affectionate treatment of his children. To his *religion* this fearful trait in his character must be traced. That taught him to regard his captive as an implacable foe, who would carry his enmity beyond the grave, and of whom, as an evil spirit, after death he would have to beware. His religion taught him that the torture and sacrifice of an enemy are peculiarly acceptable to the deities whom he worshipped. "A negro," says Dupuis, "can hardly be persuaded that an enemy might be converted into a friend; and, as he naturally thirsts after his gold, if he is so far successful, nothing can satiate him short of his opponent's blood, which is esteemed the portion of the spoil due to the tutelar gods, (and acceptable to the shades of his ancestors,) whose service it is incumbent on him not to neglect, lest their wrath should overwhelm him on a future day." This solves the

difficulty, and shows on what principle the most diabolical revenge is sometimes combined in the same individual with great natural affection. When once it is ascertained that a people are thoroughly imbued with the persuasion that the deities, whom they regard as the arbiters of their own fate, require human sacrifices as the most acceptable offerings which their votaries can possibly present, — that those deities, in fact, employ themselves in promoting and fomenting war, that their altars may continually reek with blood, — the horrid scenes enacted in Ashantee cease to create surprise.

Polygamy is another of the distinguishing features of society in Africa. The kings and principal persons have usually a great number of wives. It is stated that the law allows the king of Ashantee to possess three thousand three hundred and thirty-three; but in what consists the charm of this mystic number, which is carefully kept up, does not appear. The king has seldom a greater number than six with him in the palace at the same time; the rest live at the country residence of the king, and in the capital, where two streets are devoted to their use. No persons are permitted to approach them but their own female relatives, or the king's messengers; and these only communicate with them at the entrances, which are closed at each end with bamboo doors, where a guard is placed. When they go abroad, which is not often the case, they are attended by a great number of little boys with whips of elephant's hide, with which they lash severely all who do not immediately turn aside into another path, or throw themselves into the bush with their hands before their eyes. Their appearance in the more public parts of the city occasions great confusion. Caboceers and captains, as well as slaves and children, are seen tumbling one over another, to avoid their approach.

When the king of Ashantee signed Bowdich's treaty, three hundred of his wives, however, were present as witnesses of the transaction; and, at a public entertainment given by the king of Dahomy, Mr. Norris saw seven hundred and thirty of the wives of that monarch, who marched in file, bearing liquors and provisions upon their heads; and these were followed by many hundreds more, classed in troops of seventy each, who walked in greater state. In Yarriba, even a caboceer has been known to possess two thousand wives; while the king of that country told Clapperton that he did not know how many wives and children

he had; but he was sure that his wives alone, hand to hand, would reach from Katunga, the capital, to Jannah — a distance, as appears from the maps, of considerably more than one hundred miles! On one occasion, he actually visited the traveller in company with five hundred wives.

This latter sovereign makes the services of his wives subservient to his pecuniary interests; for Clapperton remarks that, in their journey from Badagry to Katunga, they found in every place some of his wives trading for him, and, like other women of the common class, carrying large loads upon their heads from town to town. The wives of the king of Ashantee, it appears, are not thus degraded, but live in a state more in accordance with their dignity. Bowdich says that the three hundred whom he saw at the signing of the treaty were arrayed in all the magnificence which a profusion of gold and silk could furnish. According to Dupuis, however, their influence is not great. Their mediation is considered unavailing in state affairs, and they are not permitted, nor do they expect, to receive presents from foreign ambassadors; whereas in Barbary, as in the East, it is of the first importance to secure female mediation; for the determination of the sultan is generally formed under the influence of the harem or seraglio.

The number of wives which caboceers and other persons possess depends partly on their rank, and partly on their ability to purchase them; for the practice which prevailed in the remote ages of patriarchal antiquity is perpetuated among the descendants of Ham. With them, also, it is the rule that the parent receives a sum for his daughter, instead of giving a fortune with her, as is the practice in European countries; and it consequently follows, that a large family of daughters is a source of wealth to an African father. Nor has the husband cause to complain, that he is required to pay for every wife; for in Fantee, and the countries near the coast, if a man can only obtain six or ten wives, the fruits of their labor are sufficient to enable him to lead a life of indolence.

In the affair of courtship the wishes of the female are but little consulted, the business being chiefly settled between the suitor and her parents. No Ashantean, however, compels his daughter to become the wife of one whom she dislikes; but, if she refuse to receive as her husband one of whom her father approves, he instantly withdraws from her his support and protection, and prohibits her mother also from affording her any aid or countenance

whatever. It is not unfrequently the case that infants are married to each other, to promote the connection of families; and infants are also frequently wedded to adults, and even to elderly men. In such cases, the husband sends a present to the mother, who brings up the child for him, until she is old enough to be removed to his own house. The caboceers speak of this as a good plan for a man who wishes to get gold; for the most innocent freedom, when the girl becomes ten or eleven years old, proves the occasion of a serious palaver with the husband; and as these marriages are not generally known, it happens that such palavers frequently occur, and a person has to make compensation for taking liberty with a wife when he supposed that he was only playing with a child. It is, moreover, a custom in Ashantee to contract for a child before it is born. When a man takes a fancy to the wife of a caboceer in a state of pregnancy, he *consaws* the infant in the womb, by the payment of a sum, varying from two to ten ounces of gold; and, should the child prove to be a girl, she is brought up for him as his wife.

The domestic arrangements, in places where polygamy prevails, are formed on a different principle from that which regulates an English domicile. In Ashantee, Fantee, and the neighboring countries, the husband lives separate from his wives, who dwell in houses or sheds built contiguous to each other in the form of a square; and in some cases they continue with their mothers. They cook and carry food to their husband, but are not allowed to partake of a meal in his presence. Sometimes his children eat with him, but more frequently he eats alone. On one occasion, when Mr. Hutchinson paid a visit to the croom of Apóko, one of the greatest men in Ashantee, he had the opportunity of witnessing a domestic scene. About the middle of the day, a large pot of yams, and another of boiled fish, were placed in a side room, whither Apóko repaired and dined; after which he divided the remaining yams and fish into a given number of portions, when the door opened, and about twenty of his sons and daughters received their respective shares in calabashes, with which they came furnished. In the after-part of the day, four of his wives arrived from Coomassie, a distance of about three miles, with some prepared food; but, as he was disposed to sleep, he sent them word that they were not to enter the room, but leave the meat, and go back again to town.

The children are left chiefly to the care of their mothers, and grow up without correction, until at length, when the perverse-

ness of a boy can no longer be endured, the Ashantean father punishes him by cutting off an ear. Some of the Ashantees, however, appeared to admit the force of Mr. Freeman's arguments in favor of early and moderate correction.

Unfaithfulness on the part of the wife is treated with severity. Death is sometimes the penalty which both the guilty parties have to pay; but more frequently the injured husband is satisfied with a fine from the parents of his offending wife, and another from her paramour. Sometimes he cuts off her nose, if her family are too powerful to be provoked by putting her to death. It is not uncommon, however, that the wives and daughters of even men in power are employed by their husbands and fathers to allure the other sex into crime, in order to involve their victims in a palaver, which has ended in their being sold into slavery, when they have not been rich enough to pay the required fine.

In Ashantee, a peculiar provision is made with reference to the female sex. One of the king's sisters is constituted the governess of the empire, or queen over the females. When this personage, on a certain occasion, honored Dupuis with a call, she was accompanied by about one hundred and fifty women and girls, many of whom were described as the wives and daughters of men of high rank. All the females in the empire are said to be placed under her direction and control. But, whatever may be the nature and object of the training to which she subjects them, it is certain that it is not intended to make the wife the rational companion and confidential friend of her husband; for, if an Ashantean wife is detected in listening to a private conversation of her husband, her curiosity is sure to cost her an ear; and, if she betrays a secret with which she has by any means become acquainted, her incensed husband punishes her by cutting off her upper lip. The sight of women who have suffered such inflictions is as common at this day in Coomassie as it was in the time of Bowdich.

In countries where polygamy prevails, it might be presumed, that either there is a great disparity between the sexes or that all do not marry. In Ashantee, the majority of the males live without wives. Sometimes a caboceer will give his daughter to a confidential slave; but celibacy is the condition of far the greater proportion of the slave population. From this unequal state of things, the grossest irregularities naturally follow. In despite of the penalties with which incontinence is visited, the violation of the marriage contract is notoriously common, and prostitution is

openly countenanced. In some instances, females are provided by the state, and are set apart to their office by public formalities and religious ceremonies. As many as two hundred and fifty females of this description have been seen together on state occasions at the court of Dahomy. But scarcely any single circumstance tends to show so clearly the demoralization of negro society, as the fact that wealthy females, on their death-bed, regard it as one of the most meritorious acts which they can perform, to bequeath to the public a few female slaves. What must be the moral condition of a people, where the state lends its authority to legalize crime, and the sanctions of religion are employed to invest vice with the attributes of virtue!